

***EXPLORING THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS IN AN
INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM: A CASE STUDY***

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this assignment is my own original work, and I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university in order to obtain a degree.

Signature:

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ABSTRACT

A problem facing many educators in inclusive classrooms is the process of assessment. This study explores the assessment process in an inclusive classroom (that is, classroom-based assessment) and the learners' experience of it. A qualitative research study was done at a private (community) primary school, using a case study approach. A combination of data collection and analysis methods was used. The qualitative nature and context of the study prohibit generalisations and confine findings largely to this study.

Assessment is a broad subject touching almost all aspects of education. There have been many influences on assessment practice and the background to assessment was examined to identify these influences and the debates around assessment practice. What emerged was that assessment has many purposes linked mainly to the motivation for doing assessment and assumptions about learning. Essentially the debate centres on the purpose of assessment in education and the need to change the way it is viewed and used. Traditional assessment practice was influenced enormously by intelligence testing and historically its main role has been evaluating learning outcomes for the purpose of certification and selection. This purpose has obscured the role of assessment in facilitating learning. Recent research has indicated its importance in this respect.

As our views of learning change, so the need to change our approach to assessment arises. Inclusion also challenges our education practices and the assumptions we make about the learning process. Learning is a complex process that is influenced by many factors including context. Assessment should thus be used in support of learning, rather than just indicating current or past achievement.

Many learners especially those experiencing barriers to learning are frustrated with the assessment process, which often discriminates against them. Research shows that assessment is not just about grading and evaluation but also about understanding the individual and the process. Planning an effective education programme should thus include planning effective assessment.

OPSOMMING

Assessering in die inklusiewe klaskamer is 'n bron van bekommernis vir baie opvoeders. Die assesseringsproses in 'n inklusiewe klas en leerders se belewenis daarvan word in hierdie werkstuk ondersoek. 'n Kwalitatiewe navorsingstudie is in 'n privaat (gemeenskap) primêreskool deur middel van 'n gevallestudie gedoen om die assesseringsproses in 'n inklusiewe klas te verken. 'n Saamgestelde aantal dataversamelings- en ontledingsmetodes is gebruik. Die konteks en kwalitatiewe aard van die studie beperk die bevindinge en verhoed dus veralgemenings.

Assessering dek 'n breë vakgebied wat heelwat aspekte van opvoeding aanraak. Daar was baie invloede op die assesseringspraktyk, en die agtergrond daarvan, asook die debatte hieromtrent is ondersoek. Wat voorgekom het, is dat daar heelwat redes aangevoer word om assessering te doen, wat meestal gekoppel is aan die motivering vir assessering, en/of vooropgestelde idees rondom die leerproses. Hoofsaaklik draai die debatte om die doel van assessering in opvoeding en die noodsaaklikheid daarvan om die sienswyse en gebruik daarvan te verander. Tradisionele assesseringspraktyke is heelwat deur intelligensietoetsing beïnvloed en was histories behep met evaluering van leernitkoms met die hoofdoel op sertifisering en keuring. Dié manier van assessering het die leerproses oorskadu en verduister. Onlangse navorsing dui op die belangrikheid hiervan.

Soos ons sienswyse van leer verander, so ook moet ons benadering tot assessering verander. Insluiting bied 'n uitdaging aan ons onderwyspraktyk en ons voorveronderstellinge aangaande die leerproses. Leer is 'n ingewikkelde proses wat deur baie faktore, insluitend konteksverband, beïnvloed word. Assessering moet as ondersteuning vir die leerproses gebruik word en nie net om huidige en vorige prestasie aan te dui nie.

Baie leerders, veral dié wat leerhindernisse ondervind, vind die assesseringsproses frustrerend en bevooroordeeld. Navorsing toon dat assessering nie net oor gradering en evaluering gaan nie, maar ook oor 'n begrip van die persoon en proses. Doeltreffende onderrigprogrambeplanning noodsaak dus ook effektiewe assesseringsbeplanning.

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NOTE

I have chosen to use the female version of pronouns in this work for convenience sake and to simplify writing. The pronoun he will only be used where the sex of the person in question is known.

The term *learners* will be used to refer to children, pupils and students in the school population in this study and others.

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CHAPTER ONE

Contextualisation and Relevance of the Research

1.1 Introduction

This study explores the assessment process (that is, classroom-based assessment) in an inclusive classroom at a private primary school and how this affects the learner. Before this process can be examined and the procedure documented, a closer look at the issues surrounding assessment is needed in order to trace the current debates surrounding these issues and to highlight the main trends or themes. It is also important to clarify the terms *assessment* and *inclusion*.

1.2 Background and Motivation for Study

Colin Conner (1999: 10) introduces the topic of assessment and remarks that the word *assessment* “conjures up a variety of images” and that to many it is “an emotional experience.”

I can identify with these sentiments as *assessment* evokes an inner agitation in me, the researcher. As a parent of a child with a specific learning difficulty and as an educator fulfilling the co-ordinating role in special education needs at a private school, I can testify to the trauma assessment can cause in the (inclusive) classroom. Past experience, as a learner, a parent and as a teacher, leaves the impression that the assessment system at school disadvantages certain learners – minority groups, second language learners, learners who experience learning difficulties to name a few. Freeman and Lewis (1998: 7) state that assessment cannot be overemphasized, as it is the single most important influence on

learning and that this influence is not necessarily positive. In fact, they say, “assessment often works against, rather than for, learning”. Hence my interest in this specific topic.

Assessment is an emotive issue and often a negative experience. Why is this? Perhaps because there is so much at stake. The purpose of assessment also varies and therefore the stakes vary. Traditional education and assessment is built on the foundation of intelligence testing. The problem is that intelligence testing is supposed to measure individual potential but in fact is biased and focuses mainly on mathematical and linguistic skills (Foxcroft & Roodt 2001; Gardner 1993). The whole basis of assessment is thus flawed, the process deficient and the results therefore imperfect.

Learners intuitively know this and also know (many of them from bitter personal experience) that assessments do not really measure what they know but how well they communicate what they know. The literature indicates that the cause for much of the debate around classroom assessment concerns this: the purpose of assessment (Broadfoot 1996; Conner 1999; Gipps 1994). Freeman and Lewis (1998:10-11) suggest that there are many purposes for assessment and that in practice they overlap and are in tension with one another. These include selection, certification, description, facilitation and improvement or transformation. Other writers in the field concur and add to the list issues such as guidance, prediction, diagnosis, and grading (Ainscow 1988; Macintosh & Hale, in Conner 1991). However, our pre-occupation with intelligence testing (IQ) has resulted in assessment focussing largely on one purpose, that of selection and certification.

One result of this selection process was the establishment of separate education for atypical learners. Inclusive education grew out of this background in Special Education, which was a kind of holding facility for learners with whom the mainstream education system was unable or unwilling to cope.

By the middle of the 20th century most Western industrialized countries had a separate special education system. Two significant international movements affected special education: the integration movement of the 1960's and the inclusion movement of the 1990's. The World Conference on Education for All, held in Jomtien, Thailand spurred on this movement towards inclusive education. But it was the Salamanca Statement issued in 1994 after an international conference on Special Needs Education that really added the impetus.

Both assessment and inclusion are topical issues, which elicit much comment from a number of diverse sectors in society (Cline 1992; Conner 1999; Filer 2000; Freeman & Lewis 1998; & Horton 1990). The debates around assessment in general and the move towards inclusion and an outcomes based education system in South Africa have raised the issue of assessment in the inclusive classroom (Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker, & Engelbrecht 1999).

1.3 Roots of Assessment

Traditional intelligence testing has influenced school assessments enormously, for instance grades/scores given on assessments are linked to the concept of a single IQ score (Murphy & Torrance in Horton 1990:15). Traditionally IQ was seen as fixed and static and could therefore be measured. Since IQ was static and genetically based, performance (and achievement) could be predicted. This view of intelligence and IQ has changed. It is now seen as dynamic and complex. It has been accepted that IQ tests have certain biases and that measurement and prediction are therefore relative.

It has also become apparent that the learning environment is an important factor (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana 1997). We need to look at the context. Learning is not merely a stimulus-response relationship but is about making/constructing meaning that is, individuals interact with the environment and create their own

meaning out of learning experiences. Learning therefore depends on more than just the individual.

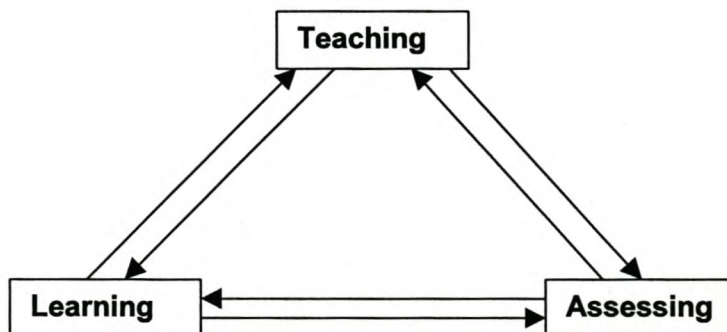
Teaching, learning and assessment are part of the same process (McCown, Driscoll & Roop 1996: 17; Sutton 1995: 2; Gipps 1994:130). This relationship is not linear, as commonly believed according to IQ and traditional assessment practices, but cyclical (see Figure 1.1). We all learn differently, but traditional assessment is linked to IQ testing which assumed a linear process that focuses on one way of doing, namely, largely logic and language. The type of assessment used is thus dictated by the assumptions about learning (McCown *et al.* 1996; Gardner 1993; Dietel, Herman, & Knuth 1991).

Figure 1.1 Assessment Approaches

a) Traditional Education: Linear



b) New Approach: Cyclical



1.4 Research Problem

The new education policy in South Africa, Curriculum 2005, represents a move away from a content-based education curriculum to a skills-based curriculum. This outcomes based education approach is a vehicle for inclusive education. Although inclusion is advocated, no system of assessment is in place for the inclusive classroom. The problem faced by many educators concerns the process of assessment in the inclusive classroom.

The research questions addressed in this study are:

- ❖ How are learners assessed in an inclusive classroom?
- ❖ What is the assessment process?
- ❖ How is the information recorded and used?
- ❖ How does the assessment process affect the learner?

1.5 Research Aim

The aim of this study is to explore the assessment process in an inclusive classroom and learners' experience of it.

1.6 Theoretical Approach of this Study

It has been noted that teaching, learning and assessment are part of the same process in education, and that it is not a linear relationship but more cyclical in nature. Assessment is an essential part of this process as it informs teaching practice (Archer & Rossouw, in Engelbrecht *et al.* 1999; Freeman 1998; Macintosh & Hale, in Conner 1991). The role of the educator in assessment is therefore also pertinent to the whole assessment debate, as the educator's paradigm will inform her teaching practice.

The inclusive classroom poses special challenges to traditional assessment practices (which, according to Kriegler & Skuy, in Engelbrecht, Kriegler & Booysen 1996: 115, focuses on the individual alone and emphasizes pathology and intrapersonal deficits) because the latter has typically depended on pencil-and-paper tests to assess mainly memorization skills (Gardner 1993). The new learner-centred approach to education demands a more holistic approach to assessment, one that focuses not only on the learner but also on the systematic analysis of the whole context (whether it is the classroom, school or wider social context).

In theoretical terms this debate represents a move away from an essentially positivist/behaviourist model of education and assessment, towards a social-constructivist model (Donald *et al.* 1997; McCown *et al.* 1996). The former view sees change as a visible end product that is, learning takes place when behaviour changes, whereas the latter sees change as a personal construct that may alter behaviour and the environment. The positivist/behaviourist paradigm asserts that all phenomena consist of a basic truth that can be discovered. They are therefore measurable and quantifiable. Behaviour is thus a response to a stimulus. The social-constructivist paradigm contends that all knowledge is socially constructed. We thus give meaning to phenomena.

Traditional theories of learning see learning as the acquisition of units of knowledge that are accumulated and eventually form a cohesive whole. The learner is seen as a passive recipient of information in this process. The current view sees learning as an active process where the learner engages with and interprets information thus creating her own unique knowledge structures. Learning is therefore not linear but proceeds in many directions and at an uneven pace (Dietel *et al.* 1991). One's perception of the nature of learning thus informs the practice of assessment.

The theoretical framework that informs one's concept and understanding of learning also influences the choice of assessment used. It is my belief that in order to accommodate diversity in the classroom and improve the quality of education for all, the assessment process and practice needs to change.

The theoretical framework that I feel most comfortable with can best be described as a social-constructivist systemic approach (Donald *et al.* 1997; McCown *et al.* 1996). That is, the world around us consists of inter-linking or interdependent systems and our understanding of these systems is individually constructed within our own system. For me learning is an intensely personal experience that is influenced not only by background, prior learning, abilities, emotions (and self-esteem), but also by learning and teaching style and preferences. No learning experience is therefore the same for all learners. Truly, learning is a complex process. Teaching and assessment therefore need to take cognizance of this fact and become more accommodating in their approach to learners.

1.7 Research Design

1.7.1 Type of research

The study undertaken is exploratory research, which revolves around the assessment process in an inclusive classroom; a less rigid design is therefore required. The process of the research itself will to a large extent dictate the next step in the process. This is the nature of qualitative research (Maykut & Morehouse 1994).

1.7.2 Literature study

The literature study provides the theoretical basis for the research and is used to guide the research process. The research questions arise out of the gaps in information in the literature.

1.7.3 Case study

The research was conducted as a case study at a private community school catering for a specific group of primary school learners.

1.7.4 Research population and sample

The research sample, Grade 6, was drawn from the population of learners in a private primary school that follows an inclusive policy.

1.7.5 Research methods

A combination of methods, such as observation, document searches and semi-structured interviews, were used to gather data.

1.7.6 Research instruments

The researcher was the main research instrument as the research took the form of a qualitative case study.

1.7.7 Data analysis

Data from the interviews, observations and documents were analysed on an ongoing basis using content analysis. The themes derived from observations and the literature became the unit of analysis.

1.8 Discussion of Terms

1.8.1 Introduction

“Different things to different people” is the definition of happiness in a popular song. The same is equally true of assessment. Peter Høeg, in his book *Borderliners* has the following sobering thoughts about assessment. He says:

“When you assess something, you are forced to assume that a linear scale of values can be applied to it. Otherwise no assessment is possible. Every person who says of something that it is good or bad or a bit better than yesterday is declaring that a points system exists; that one can, in a

reasonably clear and obvious fashion, set some sort of a number against an achievement (English translation, 1995: 78)."

Assessment is a concept that has been embraced enthusiastically by education and developed into a specialized field of endeavour. Some writers and researchers believe the term *assessment* comes from the Latin '*ad sedere*', which means to sit beside. Thus, they explain, assessment is essentially about sharing the educational experience and providing guidance and feedback to the learner (Satterly 1989: 1). Freeman and Lewis (1998: 8) are more inclined to agree with Høeg's view of assessment. According to them the concept originated in legal practice, that assumes an objective process of weighing up evidence based on stipulated criteria in order to make a fair and equitable value judgement. We thus have two views on assessment, a subjective process of judging versus a process of empowerment through guidance and feedback.

Assessment has assumed a variety of meanings dependent on the context and the user (that is, on the application of the information produced by the evidence). A variety of people have a stake in the education assessment process (Freeman & Lewis 1998; Conner 1991). These stakeholders have different expectations of the process born of their perception of the purpose of assessment. The stakeholders include the learner; the educator; the school; the parents; education as a whole and society at large.

What is at stake for each of these?

- The learner expects to receive information from the assessment that will enable her (see note on pronouns and gender in preface) to gauge her progress and provide information that will direct future learning.
- The assessment process should enable the educator to build up a picture of the learner, identifying strengths and weaknesses, so that appropriate choices can be made with regard to teaching strategies, content and educational guidelines. It is also about assessing the actual teaching process and its ability to meet the needs of the learners and the demands of the curriculum.

- The school uses the information from assessments to establish whether the curriculum criteria and outcomes are being met.
- Parents, on the other hand, want to know that their child is receiving a quality education, that standards are being maintained and that their money is being spent wisely.
- For the school and parents, assessment is mainly about accountability (of the educators and the process).
- Education as a whole and society expects the education fraternity to provide a return on the money invested in education and to provide a literate workforce.

As the above indicates, assessment fulfills a number of roles. These include assessment for formative feedback on learning (learners and educators); assessment for summative evaluation (educators and schools); assessment for the monitoring of standards (parents, schools and society); assessment for certification (society); and assessment for selection (society). These roles often act in competition with each other and assessment systems in different locations emphasize each role to varying degrees (Little: 1997).

Le Grange and Reddy (1998: 4-5) discuss four terms used to describe assessment namely formative, summative, norm-referenced and criterion-referenced.

Formative assessment is conducted during the learning process and informs both the teaching and learning process. Summative assessment usually consists of one main test or exam written at the end of a learning experience. Summative assessment is almost always norm-referenced.

Norm-referenced assessment means that a learner's performance is compared to other learners' performance or with a pass mark. Norm-referenced assessment reflects little about what the learner has mastered or understood.

Freeman and Lewis (1998:16) note that the purpose of norm-referenced assessment is to differentiate between learners. For learners to improve it means they must move up the rank order at the expense of other learners. Learners are thus not in control of their performance, as performance always depends on the achievement of others. If, for instance, the mean mark is used as the norm half the learners will always be below this level no matter how well they score. This is often linked to the normal distribution or 'bell curve'.

Criterion-referenced assessment measures learner performance against certain set criteria. Freeman and Lewis (1998: 18) note that learners' performances are measured against an explicit previously determined standard. No attempt is made to compare learners with one another. Criterion-referenced assessment requires human judgement to be exercised. It is more useful than norm-referenced assessment as it indicates what has been achieved and what still needs to be achieved.

Freeman and Lewis refer to another form of assessment introduced by Rowntree (1998: 21), namely ipsative assessment. This form of assessment compares a learner's performance in relation to her own previous efforts. They note that this form of assessment is appropriate when a learner has set her own learning objectives.

The assessment model that has been introduced into the South African education arena is continuous assessment. Continuous assessment "involves the assessment of the whole learner on an ongoing basis, throughout the whole learning process, so that the learner's development is always monitored and nurtured" (Le Grange & Reddy 1998: 10). This form of assessment is discussed in full in chapter two (see 2.4 The South African Perspective).

Various types of assessment can be used together, however those concerned with assessment need to be very clear about the basis on which any assessment

judgement is made. This is particularly important when reporting results and deciding on what action to take (Freeman & Lewis 1998: 21).

The various roles of assessment, prompted by the diverse purposes of and uses to which the information from assessments is put, bring another issue into the arena: the problem of terminology. Various terms are encountered in the literature and these cause much confusion in the field of assessment.

Many writers and professionals in the field of education use terms such as *assessment*, *evaluation*, *measurement* and *testing* interchangeably. Some writers and researchers, however, argue that in fact their meanings differ. These researchers feel that although these terms are related there are important distinctions. I will try to reflect this diversity by highlighting some definitions across the spectrum of those writing in the field of assessment.

1.8.1.1 Defining assessment

Freeman and Lewis (1998: 8-9) discuss some definitions of assessment and conclude that of the various meanings given, 'to estimate the worth or extent of, judge, or evaluate' is the closest to the educational meaning of assessment.

The Collins English Dictionary (1982) does not distinguish between the most widely used terms of *assessment* and *evaluation*. They are seen as synonymous. Le Grange and Reddy (1998: 37) define *assessment* as "the gathering of information about a learner to measure and make decisions about his or her performance". McCown *et al.* (1996:424-425) prefer to define *assessment* as "the process of gathering, analyzing, and interpreting information about students and their progress in school". McCown *et al.* (1996:424-425) thus view assessment ...as "a comprehensive and multifaceted analysis of performance".

Venn (1994: 3) sees no need to separate the various terms, for him assessment is all encompassing. He defines *assessment* as "the process of using tests and

other measures of student performance and behaviour to make educational decisions. Assessment consists of an assortment of techniques and procedures for evaluating, estimating, appraising, and making conclusions about students". Yiannis Mavrommatis (in *Assessment in Education* 1997: 381) refers to Venn's concept of assessment by the term *classroom assessment*.

1.8.1.2 Evaluation

McCown *et al.* (1996:424-425) describe *evaluation* as "the process by which educators make specific judgements by answering the questions 'How good?' or 'How well?'" For Le Grange and Reddy (1998: 37) on the other hand, *evaluation* is defined as "the process of making judgements about the context in which learning takes place, for example the curriculum, teaching methods and educational resources such as textbooks". Whereas Sieborger (1998: 5) sees *evaluation* as "a process by which the effects and effectiveness of teaching can be determined."

1.8.1.3 Measurement

Measurement is a process of describing a student's particular characteristics according to McCown *et al.* (1996:424-425). They state that *measurement* answers the question "How much?"

1.8.1.4 Testing

Polloway and Jones (in Smith, Polloway, Patton & Dowdy 1998: 65) define testing as "the presentation of tasks or questions to a student within an organized context in order to obtain a score". Thus, they add, testing is only one aspect of assessment. McCown *et al.* (1996:424-425) on the other hand define testing as a formal procedure for measuring a sample of student performance e.g. a geography test.

We have seen that there are many definitions of *assessment*, most of which link assessment to measurement. As Kanjee (1999: 288) points out there are two

defining features of assessment. First, assessment involves measurement of one sort or another but it is a broader concept than measurement or testing. Secondly, assessment is about obtaining additional information (information beyond the immediate interactive situation) in order to facilitate decisions.

Assessment, in my view, is an all-embracing concept that includes not only testing, evaluating, measuring and collecting information about a learner, but also a consideration of the unique characteristics each learner brings to the learning environment.

1.8.2 Defining Inclusion

A discussion on inclusion presupposes an understanding of *mainstreaming* and *integration*. The three concepts are intimately related and in order to understand these concepts properly it is necessary to define each one.

1.8.2.1 Mainstreaming

Mainstream education refers to the standard, 'normal' classroom, school, and curriculum. Mainstreaming refers to the act of including a child with special education needs in the mainstream classroom and curriculum. It assumes the resources needed to meet the needs of the child are in place (Donald *et al.* 1997: 20). However, Engelbrecht (in Engelbrecht *et al.* 1999: 7) opines that mainstreaming selectively integrates learners with special needs into mainstream classrooms.

1.8.2.2 Integration

Integration refers to the placement of all learners into a unitary education system. Integration involves more extensive participation of learners with special needs in activities with non-disabled peers, but significant instruction time is spent in separate settings that is, learners are withdrawn from the classroom for one-on-one or small group instruction (Engelbrecht *et al.* 1996: 34; 1999: 8).

1.8.2.3 Inclusion

What *inclusion* or *inclusive education* means exactly is still being debated in various quarters. Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (1997: 20) see *inclusion* as the practice of including learners with a variety of educational needs in the same education system, where the needs of the child are met as “normally and inclusively as possible”. According to Smith *et al* (1998: 24) the concept of *inclusion* means “more than simply placing students with disabilities in general education classrooms. It means giving students the opportunity to participate as members in all school activities and affirming their right to such opportunity”.

The inclusive classroom therefore “symbolises the single system of education which embraces all learners at all levels of ability whatever their cultures, languages, learning styles and personalities. An inclusive classroom provides a learning environment which is free of bias and is respectful of the rights and needs of educators, learners and parents in a free and democratic society” (Archer & Rossouw, in Engelbrecht 1999: 97). Udvari-Solner and Thousand (in Clark, Dyson & Millward 1995: 147) concur. They see inclusive education as an environment that caters for the needs and promotes the success of all. An inclusive classroom is thus a “supportive community”.

1.9 Structure of Presentation

Chapter One introduces the study topic, while Chapter Two contains the literature review. The literature review focuses on assessment debates and trends, the purpose of assessment, the theoretical framework informing modes of assessment and the role of the educator.

Chapter Three outlines the research design and methodology used for this assignment and documents the fieldwork, a case study undertaken at a private primary school. The results of this study and a discussion of the outcomes are

contained in Chapter Four. Chapter Five concludes the study and looks at some of the implications of the research.

1.10 Summary

This chapter contextualised the reasons for undertaking this study and briefly noted the connection between assessment and intelligence testing. The research topic and study process were presented and the central concepts of *assessment* and *inclusion* were explored and defined.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter contextualised the research. This chapter will focus on presenting the assessment debates and trends as they occur in the literature reviewed. The review will begin with an overview of the assessment traditions and the international debate on assessment, then look more closely at the issue of assessment in South Africa and in the inclusive classroom.

2.2 Assessment Traditions

2.2.1 Traditional assessment

According to Foxcroft, Roodt and Abrahams (2001:12) the first recorded use of an assessment procedure is in the Bible, when Gideon selected his troops according to criteria provided by God (Judges 7: 1-8). Oakland and Hambleton (1995: 2) trace the birth of assessment to China more than 3000 years ago, where a three-part examination for civil service entry was in place. They note that the history of educational and psychological assessment is long and uneven. There was little development in this field until the eighteenth century.

The Industrial Revolution, which started in England in the 1700's and spread to the USA and Europe in the 1800's, prompted the need for a selection process. Previously social rank or favour determined selection. People streamed to the cities and as more learners entered the public education system the need arose to evaluate learner ability and provide information to the educators. Also, as the economy flourished, jobs previously reserved for those with appropriate social standing were opened to the middle classes and methods were needed to select and place an expanding workforce (Gipps 1990).

Historically assessment in education is rooted in psychology and more specifically, in intelligence testing. The practice of intelligence testing started with the French psychologist Binet in 1905. He developed an assessment scale that would determine the level of mental functioning of learners. His scale was based on the concept of *mental age*. Binet felt that learners improve their mental ability, as they grow older. The purpose of the testing was to determine the level of functioning of learners in relation to a peer group so those learners with special needs could be identified. Terman and his colleagues at Stanford University translated and revised the Binet Scale for the American market. The concept of *intelligence quotient* (IQ) replaced Binet's concept of *mental age* and the assessment became known in the United States of America (USA) as the Stanford-Binet Scale (Owen & Taljaard 1996: 158-160). Other psychologists, notably in the United Kingdom (UK), were working on a theory of intelligence and Spearman published a paper on general intelligence in 1904.

Both Binet and Terman used IQ tests to identify learners with special educational needs. It was Terman, however, who suggested learners could be grouped according to ability and follow different educational courses (Gipps 1990: 5).

As pointed out previously, traditional assessment rests on the paradigm of intelligence, that it is a fixed, genetically based concept and that learning is a function of individual ability (Gipps 1990). The whole assessment arena thus focuses on the individual without any reference to context. The main function of traditional assessment has been selection. IQ testing, you will remember, was developed to screen learners in order to establish their fitness for education. It was later used to stream learners that is, to select learners for different courses (Gipps 1990:6).

During World War I large-scale assessment was used by the US Army to select and place recruits (Owen & Taljaard 1996: 158-160). Traditional assessments were also typically used to select learners: for high school or university (McCown

et al. 1996: 426) and for entry to certain jobs. Since assessment practice is linked to teaching practice, which in turn is directed by a learning paradigm (Conner 1991; Dietel 1991; Gardner 1993), it follows that as our perception of learning changes assessment practice will be affected. The notion of intelligence and our understanding of learning and how it occurs have evolved since Binet's work in France.

The period between the world wars was a boon for the development of psychological tests, but critics started pointing out the flaws in existing assessments. One criticism of intelligence tests was that they were too dependent on language and verbal skills, which reduced the appropriateness for certain individuals [e.g. dyslexics, illiterates] (Foxcroft & Roodt 2001: 19).

The predominant theoretical approach underlying teaching, learning and assessment since Binet has been positivism and behaviourism. Essentially this means that knowledge is seen as an external truth to be grasped and internalised. The behaviourist approach describes learning in terms of learned responses. Teaching is thus seen as supplying passive learners with knowledge. Assessment consists of measuring the ability of a learner to absorb and regurgitate information. Similarly a cognitive approach describes learning in terms of information processing.

2.2.2 Current views on assessment

Around the 1950's, the status of intelligence testing started diminishing in the USA and UK. In the USA this was largely as a result of the growing awareness of the cultural bias in most tests that favours learners of white Anglo-Saxon descent. In the UK it was mainly due to the realisation that coaching and practice influenced performance on assessments (Gipps 1990: 7).

It became apparent over time that context played a role in learning and that individuals are 'culture bound'.

Two theorists in particular have had a significant impact on the way learning is perceived (and therefore how it is assessed).

Vygotsky, a Russian psychologist and theorist, emphasized that people are social beings and that knowledge is socially constructed. He noted that learners from infancy onward are engaged in social interaction with their parents, peers and educators. Through this interaction a body of knowledge and meaning is constructed. These meanings cannot be isolated from their social, and therefore cultural, context, and because meanings are socially constructed they are not fixed or static. Language is particularly important as a tool for cognitive development and is both a carrier of understanding and a means of development. Another concept that has importance for learning is that of the 'zone of proximal development' (zpd). The zpd is described as the space between what a child is capable of learning on her own and that which can be learned with adult or other assistance that is, through mediation. This theory has implications for teaching, learning and assessment [especially in special needs education] (Donald *et al.* 1997; Mc Cown *et al.* 1996; Engelbrecht *et al.* 1996).

Feuerstein, an Israeli education and psychology theorist, combined aspects of Piagetian and Vygotskian theory to produce a theory of learning. Piaget theorized that learners move through various stages in their cognitive development. Like Vygotsky he believed they actively interacted with their environment in order to construct knowledge. Piaget looked at the universal changes in cognition that take place with development, whereas Vygotsky emphasised the social and cultural aspects. There is also some similarity between their respective concepts of 'equilibration' and 'zpd' (McCown *et al.* 1996; Engelbrecht *et al.* 1996). Feuerstein's approach to learning looked at cognitive modifiability, emphasizing the importance of culture, values and beliefs and the role of 'mediators' in the cognitive development of individuals. According to Feuerstein a child learns by example and instruction. Behaviour, attitudes and values are mediated to her by one or many caregivers. The child will be shown culturally appropriate ways of

attending, remembering and thinking. Through this interaction in cultural settings learners discover what knowledge is important and acceptable ways of acquiring and selecting this knowledge (Engelbrecht *et al.* 1996).

Systems theory has also influenced recent thinking in education. This approach looks at individual development within the context of society. Essentially this approach sees different groups in society as 'systems' where the functioning of the whole is dependent on the interaction between the parts. The most important aspect of this view is that cause and effect relationships are seen as occurring in cycles that is, that they are multi-directional. In systems thinking actions are seen as triggering one another and can form patterns. When these patterns become established they are seen as unwritten 'rules' which can direct the system. This view of interactions has implications for the classroom as a social system (Donald *et al.* 1997: 36).

A discussion on assessment (and its purpose) in the inclusive classroom would be incomplete without reference to Howard Gardner's views. His work on 'multiple intelligences' and the need to cater for more than one way of doing and learning, highlights not only the differences in 'regular' classrooms but points to the diversity found in inclusive classrooms. The diversity in learning modes or styles leads naturally to the need for diverse modes of assessing learning and achievement. Gardner, in his book on *Multiple Intelligences* (1993: 159-207) describes what he considers the two extremes of assessment: formal testing, in a decontextualized setting, by means of a paper-and-pen examination; and an apprentice system where assessment takes place within a naturally occurring context over a number of tasks over time. It is evident, he suggests, that these two forms of assessment were designed to meet different needs. It may also seem as if these two forms of assessment serve different sectors of society, but this is not so. Each can be used in differing settings. Gardner proposes that the widespread use of formal testing can be traced to the work of Binet and his intelligence tests. He points out that schools are not uniform, and learners are

unique. Each one has unique gifts and learns in a different manner. The same method of assessment can thus not be applied to all. He suggests that his work on multiple intelligences is evidence enough that individuals differ sufficiently to warrant alternate forms of teaching and assessment. According to Gardner (1993: 159-160) "while assessment is a key component of education, it is by no means the only one. Indeed, education needs to be approached in the first instance by a consideration of the goals to be achieved, and the means for achieving them".

The current learning paradigm of social-constructivism describes learning in terms of individually constructed meaning, that is each individual learner interacts with the learning environment and constructs meaning for themselves (Donald *et al.* 1997).

It should be evident from the above discussion that "views about assessment are influenced and informed by particular... theories [of learning]" (Conner 1999: 14).

2.3 The International Debate on Assessment

The literature reviewed was mainly drawn from the USA and UK, since most of the literature available on this topic emanates from these countries. These two countries have also recently re-evaluated their own assessment practices. As was indicated earlier in this chapter, assessment traditions in both the UK and USA were firmly rooted in psychometry and the medical model, that is, the scientific tradition.

There is consensus among a number of writers in literature on assessment in education that assessment has been misused. Although there are numerous functions of assessment, in reality assessment has mostly been utilised for selection and certification or for selection and placement purposes. The other functions have only played a small part in education (Gipps 1990; Murhpy &

Torrance, in Horton 1990). Part of the problem, suggests Conner (1999), is the way in which the term *assessment* has been interpreted. At the one end of the continuum, it has been interpreted from a “hard-nosed objectivity” perspective where the purpose of assessment is seen as a sifting and sorting mechanism. At the other is a more positive view of assessment, where the main purpose is to help learners achieve their potential. According to Sally Brown (in Horton 1990: 5) one of the features of the movement towards change in education is “the recognition that assessment, as part of education, must be about promoting learning and opportunities, rather than about sorting people into social roles for society”. The emphasis in the past has clearly been on what was seen as the objective, scientifically correct approach. Conner (1999) also suggests that our understanding of assessment, and therefore its purpose, is influenced by our view of the learning process.

Essentially the debate thus centres on the purpose of assessment in education and the need to change the way it is viewed and used. One of the most contentious issues seems to be the fact that assessment is being used as a tool to improve education and teaching specifically (Torrance 1995). The range of the current debate affects all levels of education from the baseline assessments of young learners entering school, through diagnostic assessment of learners with special educational needs, to vocational assessment, assessment for accreditation of prior learning and work-based assessment (Conner 1999: 9).

Assessment, because of its vital and integral part in the education process, is seen by many as a means to overhaul the education process and the system itself. Proposals for how this would actually be done vary from country to country.

In the USA the argument put forward by the proponents of assessment reform was that it could drive education reform. It is argued that traditional assessments have a restricting effect on the curriculum and teaching methods. Traditional assessment can lead to educators coaching their learners in a narrow range of

test-taking skills, thus effectively narrowing the curriculum. By changing the approach to assessment, it is hoped that the curriculum content and the range of competencies and skills tested can be enlarged, and that educators will be encouraged to expand their teaching methods and curriculum coverage. Assessment thus effectively 'drives' the process.

In the UK, on the other hand, it was hoped that education reform could be achieved through the more direct political intervention of changing assessment practice. This would be done by setting standards and then establishing tests to measure whether or not these standards had been met and in so doing raise the levels of achievement (Torrance 1995:145-156). Education reforms have targeted assessment practices, and more specifically the move away from traditional assessment to alternate forms of assessment, as well as the accommodation of learners with special needs in mainstream classrooms. Many teachers and educators feel, however, that the new legislation has resulted in a refocusing of the process rather than an improvement on the previous system. Whereas the process was previously results-driven and concerned with summative assessments, creating competition between learners and schools to the detriment of the education process, the new focus is on the teacher's performance and not on learner achievement as was originally intended.

Cedric Cullingford (1997: 1) offers some cautionary words regarding assessment. While assessment of some kind or another is a necessary tool, he says, it is a double-edged sword. Although assessment is the starting point to creating, improving and refining something, in this case the education process, it however also has the potential to destroy what it seeks to improve. The destructive side of assessment is not always that obvious though, and what may start out as a means to changing something may become an end in itself.

The views expressed by the various writers cited clearly show the movement away from traditional assessment towards a broader alternate view of assessment.

2.4 The South African Perspective on Assessment

In South Africa (SA) there has also been debate around the purpose of education and assessment. According to the Public Discussion Document “*Education for All*” (National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training [NCSNET] and National Committee for Education Support services [NCESS], August 1997: 66) assessment practices in education in SA are closely linked to the changing nature of society and its effect on education. Many characteristics of past assessment policy reflected the main purpose of assessment, namely classification and labeling for placement. A new approach to assessment is seen as a powerful tool for transformation.

The bases of the assessment tradition in SA were inherited from our colonial forefathers. It thus had a very similar developmental pattern to the assessment traditions internationally. Although our assessment tradition developed along the same lines as the colonialists, assessment in SA (as in most colonies) developed in a context of unequal distribution of resources and racial segregation. Tests were standardized for whites and used by the Department of Education to place white learners in special education. These early tests were either adaptations of international tests or tests specifically produced for use in SA. The widely used Stanford-Binet Scale, for example, was adapted for use with white South Africans by Dr. ML Fick and became known as the Fick Scale. These tests, although standardized for whites, were also administered to groups of coloured, black and Indian learners when the Nationalist government started establishing ‘Bantu education’. The inferior scores gained were used as justification for separate development (Foxcroft, Roodt & Abrahams 2001: 22-23).

The first study of bias in psychological assessments in SA only took place in 1986, despite its widespread use. Research showed that bias existed in other aptitude and personality tests used in SA as well. The use (and abuse) of culturally biased assessments as well as the realization that these measures were used to deprive certain groups of opportunities, resulted in the development of a negative perception towards the use of psychological measures in particular. The growing resistance to assessment measures led to the banning of routine group assessments after the election of the African National Congress (ANC) in the 1994 democratic elections (Foxcroft, Roodt & Abrahams 2001:26-27).

The political and social changes experienced in SA in the last decade are mirrored in education. The rigid colonial-apartheid system of education with its traditional forms of assessment and emphasis on separate development has been replaced by a single, inclusive, outcomes based system of education (OBE) featuring a system of continuous assessment. OBE calls not only for a shift from content to skills based education, but also for an inclusive approach. This reflects an international trend both in terms of inclusion and assessment as a means of education renewal and reform. Bélanger (2000:233) points out that “the inclusive education approach calls into question the psychological and medical approaches to social education, which take for granted that problems and difficulties are inherent within the individuals themselves and are not related to the contexts in which they interact.”

In the past the curriculum perpetuated race, class, gender, ethnic and ability divisions and emphasized separateness. Traditional teaching methods focussed largely on supplying learners with subject content and developing a learner's memory capacity. No understanding or application of content was encouraged and traditional assessment practices concentrated on measuring the ability of the learner to reproduce this content. Traditional assessment practices were therefore mostly summative and norm-referenced. That is, they focussed on the end product, information recall, and ranking the assessed.

The new curriculum is based on principles of co-operation, critical thinking, social responsibility and empowerment of individuals to participate in all aspects of society. The task of the new education policy is “ the establishment of a just and equitable education and training system which is relevant, of high quality and is accessible to all learners, irrespective of race, colour, gender age, religion, ability or language.” (Curriculum 2005, Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century: A User's Guide, Department of National Education [DNE], 9 April 1997). Curriculum 2005 broadens the focus of the curriculum across eight learning areas. Cross curriculum teaching is encouraged, as is active learner participation through group work. This ensures that subject areas are not compartmentalized and that learners can apply the knowledge gained across disciplines (DNE, October 1997). The Continuous Assessment Model (CASS) has been proposed as the assessment approach of choice for Curriculum 2005. “The practice of continuous assessment will underpin all assessment across all education and training bands at all levels” (Curriculum 2005: Lifelong Learning for the 21st century). Educators should not interpret CASS as being a cumulation of test results. CASS will include using the following assessment methods:

- Continuous assessment
- Diagnostic assessment
- Achievement-based assessment
- Self assessment
- Peer assessment
- Portfolio assessment
- Performance assessment
- Observation sheets
- Journals
- Teacher made tests
- Assessment of prior learning

Thus the paradigm shift from promotion decisions based on the results of a single test or examination will be replaced by ongoing assessment throughout

the learning process. The learner's development is thus always monitored and nurtured by providing feedback to facilitate further positive learning. Continuous assessment is therefore more formative than summative (Le Grange & Reddy 1998: 10-11).

Assessment guidelines distributed by the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) as part of the Interim Policy document in 1998 state that assessment should:

- Identify prior learning and take it into account
- Motivate learners
- Be ongoing
- Be diagnostic
- Help learners to see that they are on a learning pathway (that is, lifelong learning)
- Cover a range of evidence
- Involve, where possible, an assessment team

According to the Department of National Education's (DNE) view, *assessment* "consists of a task or series of tasks set in order to obtain information about a learner's competence. These tasks could be assessed in a variety of ways using different assessment techniques throughout the learning process" (DNE, October 1997: 11). It elaborates by adding, "assessment in outcomes-based education is for development and growth rather than for promotion. The emphasis is placed on formative, continuous assessment of the learner's work over a period of time" (DNE October 1997: 24).

2.5 The Assessment Issues

How a theoretical perspective on learning influences assessment practice has been discussed in the preceding pages. I have also pointed to the various roles and functions served by assessment in society.

Essentially the assessment issues revolve around the following questions:

- ❖ Why do we assess?
- ❖ What do we assess?
- ❖ How do we assess?
- ❖ Who wants to know?

2.5.1 What is the purpose of assessment?

To establish the purpose of assessment we need to find out why assessment is being done. What information is being sought and what will the information be used for? According to the various researchers encountered in the literature there are a variety of purposes of assessment.

Caroline Gipps (1990: 15,17 and 1994: 3,4) states that assessments come not only in a range of forms but with different purposes and underlying philosophies. The first question to be asked, she says, when considering the form of assessment to be used is “what is the assessment for?” Gipps feels that the most important purpose of assessment should be professional: that is, supporting the teaching/learning process. However, she continues the taxpayer and parents are interested in the overall performance of the education system and of individual schools, that is, accountability.

Gipps (1990: 14-16) mentions six uses or purposes for assessments: screening, diagnosis, record keeping, feedback on performance, certification and selection (see Figure 2.1). Briefly these purposes can be described as follows:

- screening is the process of testing learners in order to ascertain their need for intervention ;
- diagnosis involves establishing learner’s individual strengths and weaknesses through testing;
- record-keeping is the recording and keeping of test scores and teacher assessments in order to substantiate individual progress or lack thereof.

This is the most passive use of test results but is usually cited as the main purpose for testing;

- feedback provides teachers with information about both the child's learning and progress and the teacher's teaching success. Feedback of results can also be used to evaluate the performance of teachers and schools;
- testing for certification indicates that a level of proficiency in a particular skill has been achieved or that a certain level of competency has been reached, for example a drivers' license or matriculation certificate; and
- testing for selection which involves a sorting process.

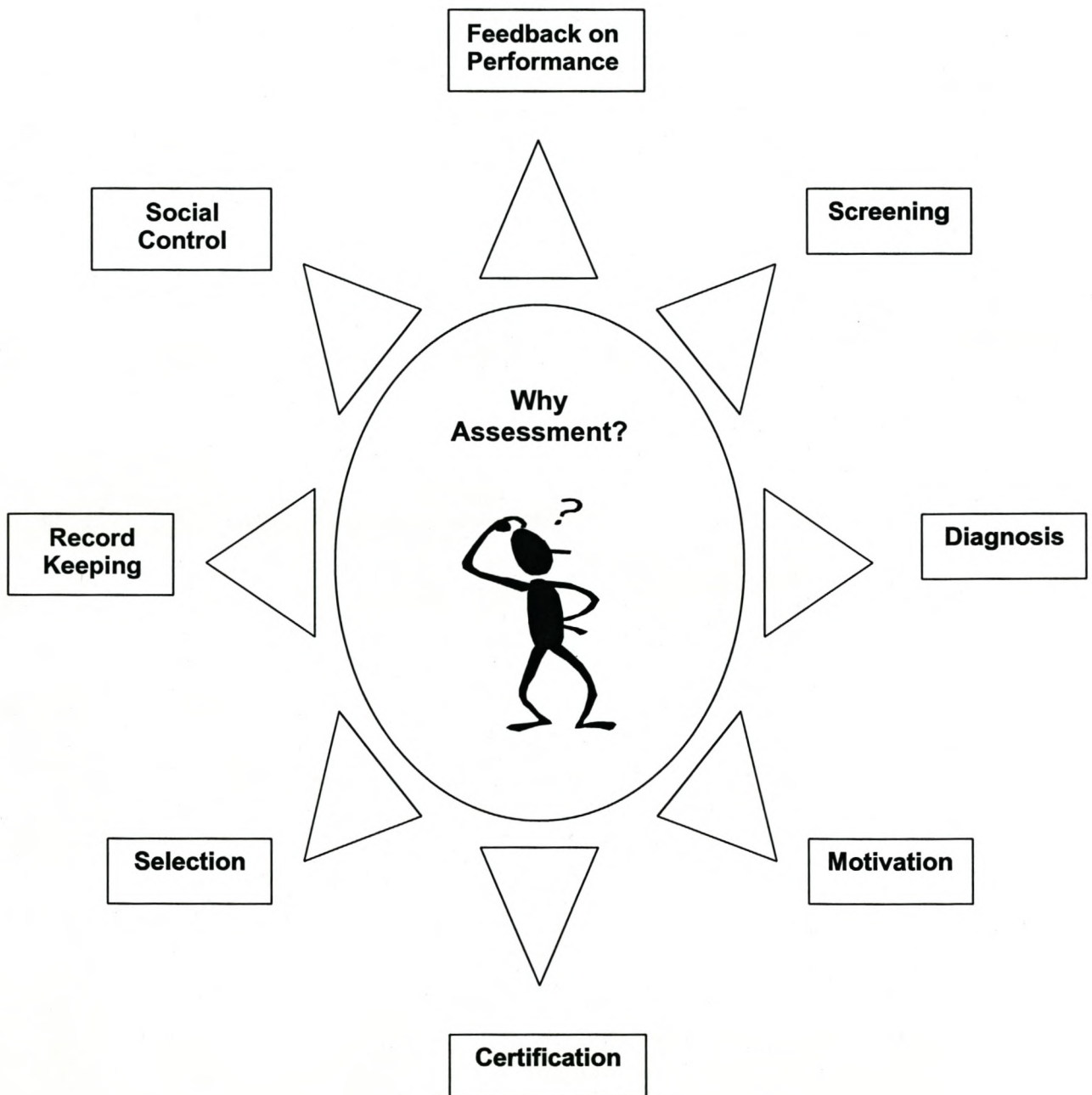
Gipps (1990: 17) proposes further that these six uses or purposes can be classified broadly into two categories: professional and managerial. Screening and diagnosis are seen as largely professional, while certification and selection are mainly a managerial function. Record keeping and feedback can operate at both levels. The prime purpose of assessment at primary level has been mostly to support the teaching/learning process, that is, the professional aspect: feedback on teaching, identifying learners with special education needs and record keeping. The government and other stakeholders, on the other hand, want to know how schools are performing, they are interested in the managerial aspect. Between these two extremes of support and accountability lies assessment for certification.

Compare these to the purposes mentioned by the other writers earlier in chapter one, especially Macintosh and Hale who are quoted extensively in literature on the subject of assessment purposes, as well as those mentioned in Curriculum 2005.

Previously in the UK and USA, success on assessments affected teachers' remuneration; teachers therefore began teaching to test in order to improve test scores. A new purpose of assessment is therefore to make sure teachers teach

the curriculum. Gipps suggests that there is a need to design assessment programmes that will do what is required and have a positive impact on teaching and learning.

Figure 2.1 **Assessment Purposes**



Roger Murphy and Harry Torrance (in Horton, 1990:12-18) also discuss the various purposes of assessment (adding *motivation* to the list, see Figure 2.1) and agree that the purpose of education and therefore assessment is assisting the learner in the education process. If assessment is flexible, they say, it can serve both the educator and the learner. This means, for example, assessment should identify successful and unsuccessful learning strategies that should in turn be fed back to the learner in order to promote a successful education process. However, in the past, assessment was often a stumbling block in the way of innovative education practice. Murphy and Torrance argue that a shift from the 'traditional view of education' needs a similar shift from the 'traditional view of assessment'. Torrance (1995) says that recently in many countries new approaches to assessment have emerged out of the debates about the purposes and methods of assessment and its impact on the process of teaching and learning.

Patricia Broadfoot (1996), on the other hand, argues that the main purpose of assessment is seen as social control (see Figure 2.1). She traces the development of assessment and suggests that its use in education fulfills a social need to maintain the mechanisms of society by filling the roles designated for individuals in the labour force. The classroom as a microcosm of society reflects the needs and values of society to maintain order. In the classroom this is done through assessment. Stephens and Izard (1992:122) concur. They believe that "learning and assessment occur in a broad social and cultural context. In that context traditional tests have been assigned typically an objective status beyond their worth. School practices are filtered by the beliefs, prejudices, and experiences of the wider society."

According to Curriculum 2005, in SA the purpose of assessment is development and growth, which can be compared to Gipps' professional aspect of assessment. Engelbrecht (1997: 59) notes that "there is a strong movement in support of the view that the main purpose of assessment should be to provide effective and efficient instruction strategies".

2.5.2 How are learners assessed?

This question concerns the assessment format. Will the assessment be formal or informal, project or test based? Will it involve the individual learner or will it be a group assessment?

Ted Wragg (1997:1) comments that “children learn in different ways and at various times, so their assessment needs to reflect that diversity”. Claudia Geocaris and Maria Ross concur (1999: 29). Wragg continues to explain that there are many ways of assessing learners ranging from frequent and informal day-to-day transactions (a smile, a frown, a word of praise, and a reprimand) to semi-formal and formal assessments (class tests and examinations). There are also numerous means of assessment. These include the most common formal methods of written examinations, oral and practical tests, assignments and projects. Wragg (1997:2) explains that while formal assessment of pupils’ progress is important, it is vital to relate this to learning through feedback. “This means that the daily routines of assessment need to be carried out just as carefully and thoughtfully as the three-hour written examination paper.”

Gipps (1994:4), while agreeing that a variety of assessment forms are necessary, feels that the main reason for this variety is that “different forms of assessment encourage, via their effect on teaching, different styles of learning”. Most assessments, however, fail to articulate this relationship between learning and assessment. She suggests that if we wish to foster higher order skills for example, our assessment system needs to reflect this.

For Torrance (1995 & Linn 1997) the need for alternate assessment forms is linked to the influence assessment has on the curriculum. Traditional assessment, says Torrance, can have a narrowing effect on the curriculum content and the teaching methods used, and can lead to learners knowing certain things without being able to generalize from specific problems to similar problems in different contexts. There is also interest in the relationship of

assessment to learning and particularly the role of assessment in the promotion of learning. Assessment, he says, can have a negative impact on learning. Broadfoot (1996) agrees and suggests that social conditioning has prepared learners to accept and internalize the negativity produced by traditional assessment. We accept without questioning that failure is a reflection of our own deficiency and not the consequence of an inadequate or biased system. Some types of formative assessment (usually those associated with a constructivist perspective) appear to be taking a more positive and dynamic approach to the relationship between assessment, teaching and learning. Establishing, therefore, not so much what learners have learned, but what they can learn with appropriate help from a teacher or peer (Torrance, 1995:1-3). A lot depends on the teacher, he says, as his research showed that the implementation of new assessment methods required teachers to be involved in the curriculum process as well, that is, willing to implement new subject matter and teaching methods. "Teachers had to want to integrate teaching and assessment in order to make the most of the opportunities for more flexible teaching which more flexible approaches to assessment offered (sic)" (1995:48).

In the book, *Assessing Student Learning: From Grading to Understanding* edited by David Allen (1998), three similar approaches to assessment (variously initiated) are discussed, namely: The Collaborative Assessment Conference, The Tuning Protocol and The California Protocol.

The three approaches mentioned will be discussed briefly below.

□ The Collaborative Assessment Conference

The Collaborative Assessment Conference (Seidel in Allen 1998: 21-39) was designed to facilitate a discussion of student's work (drawings, poems, writing *etcetera*) by a group of teachers. The protocol has a series of distinct sections. Briefly the structure follows:

- *Reading the text.* In silence, everyone reads a selected student text brought to the session by a 'presenting' teacher.

3.4 Research Methodology

3.4.1 Case study

A qualitative case study (also known as interpretive research) was used as the research format. Merriam (1998: 29-34) explains that a qualitative case study is characterized by a rich, 'thick' description of the phenomenon being studied. *Thick* description, she says, is an anthropological term that means the complete, literal description of the entity being investigated. The description is usually qualitative.

The literature reviewed indicates that it is the most appropriate approach to follow in this instance. Judith Bell (1993: 8) states that "a case study is concerned principally with the interaction of factors and events and ... sometimes it is only by taking a practical instance that we can obtain a full picture of this interaction". A case could be a person, a programme, a group such as a class, a specific policy etcetera. Yin (in Merriam 1998: 27) concurs, according to him "a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident". Huysamen (1994: 168) also agrees and suggests its appropriateness since it is "directed at the understanding of the uniqueness and the idiosyncrasy of a particular case in all its complexity (sic)". Merriam however feels that defining a case study in terms of process is only one way of looking at it. She suggests (1998: 34) that a qualitative case study can also be defined in terms of the unit of study (the bounded system, the case) or the end product.

Bell (1993: 9) does point out though, that one of the pitfalls of using a case study approach in research is that it is difficult to cross check information, therefore distortion is possible. Generalization of results is usually not possible either.

The study was undertaken at a private, co-educational community school that caters for approximately 280 primary school learners (at this particular campus). This campus is a member of a five-school family, which consists of three primary schools, a middle school and a high school. As a community school, the learner body is made up of learners from a particular community with strong religious and cultural ties. Although there are a few learners at this school who do not belong to this specific community, the majority of learners do. The school thus has a homogeneous population, certainly with regard to social, cultural and religious matters.

The school, although not inclusive, has an inclusive policy. This means that the school in the study will accept any learner *from the community* if it feels it can reasonably cater for the learner in the system. By *reasonably cater*, is meant that the school will take on a learner if it can supply at least the same services and facilities that an inclusive or specialized school can offer that particular learner. (Although our particular campus has no learners with physical disabilities, there are learners with physical disabilities at some of the other campuses).

Besides the normal compliment of teaching staff, the school in the study has a fully functional support team (see Appendix A). This team comprises an educational psychologist, a social worker, a remedial therapist and a special education needs co-ordinator. The school also has close links with an occupational therapist and speech and language therapist who have integrated their services with those of the school, to the benefit of learners, school and therapists.

3.4.2 Population and sample

The population for the study comprised the learner body at a private primary school (grades 1 to 6, that is, six to twelve year olds).

The sample, namely Grade 6, was drawn from this population and represents a convenience sample. This means that the participants were selected because they were readily available (Mertens 1998: 265). Huysamen (1994: 44) refers to this sample as an accidental sample.

The research sample was also chosen for the following reasons:

- The class teachers for these two classes also teach at least three subjects to these classes;
- These classes thus have more contact with the class teacher, who is responsible for compiling the reports at the end of a cycle;
- Besides seeing learners in the home class, the teacher is able to assess learners across more than one subject; and
- The learners are at an age where they are probably more verbally expressive regarding their experiences in the classroom than younger learners.

Grade 6, from which the sample was taken, comprises two classes of 21 and 22 learners respectively.

- a) Class 1 with 22 learners, is made up of ten boys and twelve girls. Of the total number in the class, six learners (four boys and two girls) are experiencing social, emotional/behavioural or learning difficulties (barriers to learning), or a combination of these.

Ms. X, the class teacher for Class 1, is a young South African-born teacher. She completed her secondary and tertiary education and teacher training overseas. Ms. X has four years teaching experience, gained in South Africa at the school in the study. She is an enthusiastic and innovative teacher with an interest in special needs education and art.

- b) Class 2 with 21 learners, is made up of eleven boys and ten girls. Of the total in this class, there are also six learners (five boys and one girl) who are experiencing some form of difficulty.

Mrs. Y, the class teacher for Class 2, is a mature educator educated and trained in South Africa. She has more than twenty years teaching experience, and holds a remedial qualification. Mrs. Y has taught various age levels at a number of different schools, both private and public, throughout SA. She is head of Mathematics at the school.

In order to follow and ascertain the learners' experience of assessment (see Appendix C for details), a second sample of three learners was selected: one special needs learner from each of the two classes and a third learner from the mainstream population. This sample, according to Huysamen (1994: 44) represents a purposive sample.

3.4.3 Research instrument

Characteristically, the researcher is the main instrument for data collection and analysis. Mertens (1998: 317) sees the researcher as the research instrument in qualitative research studies "that collects data by observing, interviewing, examining records and documents in the research setting, or using a combination of these methods". Merriam (1998: 7) elaborates on the role of the researcher as research instrument. She notes that "certain characteristics differentiate the human researcher from other data collection instruments." Namely, the researcher:

- is responsive to the context;
- can adapt techniques to circumstances;
- can consider the total context;
- can expand what is known about the situation through sensitivity to non-verbal aspects;
- can process data immediately, can clarify and summarize as the study evolves, and can explore anomalous responses.

Nathalie Bélanger (2000: 236) warns, though, “the role of the researchers cannot be considered a neutral presence in schools or any other social institution.”

I, the researcher, am a mature educator with broad-based educational experience and am a relative newcomer to the school in the study. I am not a member of the community in which the school operates and in terms of the school structure, I am a member of the learning support team (see Appendix A). As such I am able to move relatively freely and almost unobtrusively in and out of the various classroom situations.

3.4.4 Data collection methods

“Any and all methods of gathering data, from testing to interviewing, can be used in a case study, although certain techniques are used more than others” (Merriam 1998: 28). In order to answer the research questions and collect data for the study, the researcher relied mainly on observation and interviews. Some pertinent documents were also examined. Merriam (1998: 148) states that interviewing, observation and document analysis are the three major data collection techniques in qualitative research.

The various data collection methods used are elaborated on below:

- Literature review

The literature reviewed for this assignment not only pegged the terrain for the study but also directed the initial research efforts and guided the processes that provided the backbone for my own investigations. Bell (1993: 34) states that methods used by other researchers may be unsuitable for your own research, but they provide ideas about how one could go about gathering and categorizing data. They also provide ways in which one could draw on the work of other researchers to support or refute one’s own arguments and conclusions. Emerging patterns and themes from the literature thus effectively channel both the literature search and the research. The literature review “informs and

modifies your own research" (Swetnam 1997: 61).

- Document search

Mertens (1998: 324) notes that all organizations leave paper trails composed of documents and records. Documents and records give the qualitative researcher access to information that would otherwise not be available. The researcher needs to look at these to get a background to the organization and insights into the dynamics of everyday functioning. Merriam (1998: 133) says that all types of documents can help the researcher uncover meaning, develop understanding, and discover relevant insights into the research problem.

The manual of policies, procedures and guidelines for the school in the study was examined in order to ascertain the policy and procedures regarding assessment in the institution. Reports for the three learners interviewed and documents (such as mark schedules, assignments, and tests – see Appendix B and C) pertaining to assessment in the school were examined.

- Observation

As with interviews, observations can be more or less structured. At the more structured end one finds the use of standardized rating scales to record samples of behaviour, for example. At the other end are observational studies in naturalistic settings where the researcher interacts informally with the observed (Terre Blanche & Kelly, in Terre Blanche & Durrheim 1999: 134).

Data about the assessment process was gathered through personal observation of the assessment process throughout the school. This data was collected over a twelve-month period so that the full cycle of the assessment process was observed. Mertens (1998: 317) comments that "qualitative observation occurs in naturalistic settings without using predetermined categories of measurement or response."

I was a participant observer for most of the assessment process, remaining for the most part unobtrusive; however, I became actively involved later in the assessment process (see below). As a staff member, I was required, in order to fulfill my duties, to participate in the assessment process at that stage. Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 72) discuss the role of the participant observer and note that the challenge facing the qualitative researcher is being there and also becoming invisible. The qualitative researcher assumes that the participants to some extent will react to her presence, but by assuming an unobtrusive presence the researcher minimizes this reactivity. This is accomplished primarily through 'prolonged engagement' where the researcher's status becomes less prominent.

▪ Interviews

Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 79) describe an interview as "conversation with a purpose". They note further that interviews often take place while one is a participant observer, although people in the setting may not realize that the informal conversations they have been engaged in are interviews. The shape of an interview in qualitative research may vary. The most common descriptions form a continuum ranging from a structured format to a relatively unstructured format. The structure of the interview thus depends largely on the extent to which questions to be asked of the interviewee have been formulated prior to the interview (Maykut & Morehouse 1994: 79-100).

Qualitative researchers favour semi-structured or unstructured interview formats for individual interviews (Mertens 1998: 322). These interview formats allow the prompting of interviewees in order to elaborate on or explain their responses to the questions asked, thereby affording the interviewer some insight into the responses. Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 83) note the difference between an *interview guide* and an *interview schedule*. They say that a series of broad interview questions, which the researcher is free to explore and probe with the interviewee, is usually referred to as an *interview guide*. On the other hand, a detailed set of questions and probes is called an *interview schedule*.

Seidman (in Terre Blanche & Durrheim 1999: 130) suggests the interviewer use the following techniques:

- listen more, talk less
- follow up on what the participant says
- ask questions when you do not understand
- ask to hear more about a subject
- explore, do not probe
- avoid leading questions
- ask open-ended questions
- do not interrupt
- keep participants focussed and ask for concrete details
- ask participants to rephrase a response
- do not reinforce participant's response
- tolerate silence and allow the interviewee to reflect

Three grade six learners and two teachers involved in the process were interviewed. The interview process was guided by the use of two semi-structured interview guides, one for teachers and one for learners, which comprised 15 (fifteen) and 14 (fourteen) questions respectively (see Appendix B). The interviews conducted were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim removing any identifying information (see Appendix B).

A number of informal discussions also took place with both learners and teachers.

▪ Field notes / Researcher's journal

Martin Terre Blanche and Kevin Kelly (in Terre Blanche & Durrheim 1999: 138) note that there are essentially two kinds of field notes. Firstly, those that describe as fully as possible what people said and did. Secondly, those that are concerned with your unfolding analysis, reflections and uncertainties.

Part of the process of data collection was maintaining field notes in a journal. These notes contained observations about the process, the research and also my internal dialogue and reflections about the observations and interviews and any questions arising out of these. The journal was a kind of think tank and record of rough work. Maykut and Morehouse (1994:68-69) note that “a richly detailed research journal becomes a useful part of the data collection and analysis process”.

It must be noted that the data collection process, that is, literature reviews, document searches, interviews and observations took place more or less in the same time frame. The one process influencing the other (see figure 3.1).

3.4.5 Data analysis

“Data analysis is the process of making sense out of data. Making sense out of data involves consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what people have said and what the researcher has seen and read...These meanings or understandings or insights constitute the findings of a study” (Merriam 1998: 178).

An important characteristic of qualitative data analysis is its ongoing nature. Once the process of data collection begins a sifting and sorting process is born. “Analysis begins when one has accumulated a subset of data. In other words, there is a broadening or narrowing of the focus of inquiry as the data suggest it” (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994: 46). Maykut and Morehouse quote Denzin (1994: 69) who points out that participant observation simultaneously combines document analysis, interviewing, direct participation and observation, and introspection. They also state that “the process of qualitative data analysis takes many forms, but is fundamentally a nonmathematical analytical procedure that involves examining the meaning of people’s words and actions” (1994: 121).

There are a variety of approaches to analyzing qualitative data. Maykut and Morehouse quote Corbin (1994:122) who describes three approaches to data analysis that can be visualized as forming a continuum, ranging from a low level of interpretation and abstraction, to a high level of interpretation and abstraction required for theory building. "The first approach is that taken by a researcher who intends to present the data without any analysis... The second approach is that of the researcher who is primarily concerned with accurately describing what she has understood, reconstructing the data into a recognizable reality for the people who have participated in the study... The third approach to data analysis, the development of theory, requires the highest level of interpretation and abstraction in order to arrive at the organizing concepts and tenets of a theory to explain the phenomenon of interest." Merriam (1998: 196) describes the range of these three approaches as "organizing a narrative description, to constructing categories or themes that cut across data, to building theory".

In terms of the above information I see my research study falling within the parameters of the second descriptive approach to data analysis. Although some selection and interpretation of data is required, the main intention of the study is to describe as accurately as possible my understanding of the research. The data obtained is thus reconstructed into a recognizable reality for the participants and others interested in the study.

Merriam (1998: 156-167) discusses some of the data analysis strategies used in educational research. They include ethnographic analysis, narrative analysis, phenomenological analysis, and the constant comparative method. She mentions too the lesser-used content analysis and analytic induction.

The data from the interviews, observations and documents were analyzed using a combination of content analysis, with themes as the unit of analysis, narrative analysis (see Appendix B for interview transcripts) and the constant comparative

method, which is sometimes called grounded theory analysis (Mertens 1998: 352).

Although content analysis has historically been used in quantitative research, in a sense all qualitative data analysis is content analysis. The content of interviews, field notes, and documents can be analyzed qualitatively for themes and recurring patterns of meaning (Merriam 1998: 160). These themes can be linked to themes derived from the observations and the literature reviewed by constantly comparing the themes across data and creating categories that encompass clusters of themes.

In narrative analysis the emphasis is on stories people tell and how these are communicated. Whether this first-person account is in the form of autobiography, life history, or interview, the text is analysed using the techniques of a particular discipline or perspective (Merriam 1998: 157-158).

Using the constant comparative method, the researcher constantly compares particular incidents or data from interviews, field notes, or documents. These comparisons lead to tentative categories that are then compared to each other (Merriam 1998: 159). Mertens (1998: 352) refers to this method of analysis as grounded theory analysis and quotes Strauss and Corbin's three steps in the analysis process, namely: open coding, axial coding and selective coding. The first step can be compared to the constant comparative approach. Open coding consists of breaking down data into discrete parts in order to examine and compare these for similarities and differences.

3.4.6 Validity and reliability

David Silverman (1993: 10) states that "*authenticity* rather than reliability is often the issue in qualitative research". The aim, he says, is an *authentic* understanding of people's experiences.

The concept of *trustworthiness* is also important in qualitative research. Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 145) explain that *trustworthiness* basically asks the question “To what extent can we place confidence in the outcomes of the study? Do we believe what the researcher has reported?” They note that a number of aspects of the research process can contribute to trustworthiness, namely:

- multiple methods of data collection – a combination of interviews, observations, document checks
- building an audit trail – researcher’s journal, original interview transcripts, field notes
- working with a research team – a few working together are better than one, however, a single researcher using multiple methods and maintaining an audit trail lays the foundation for a credible study
- member checks – asking research participants to check work for authenticity and accuracy

As a staff member at the school in the study, I knew the participants, which ensured easy accessibility to information and a degree of trust but also raised questions regarding bias and objectivity.

It is not my intention to generalize the findings of this study to other educational institutions, but to observe a particular process (assessment) in practice. Questions of reliability and validity are therefore confined to the field being explored. Data obtained were verified as far as possible by discussing observations and findings with those involved in the study. The reliability of the data obtained in a qualitative study such as this is largely a function of the researcher as research instrument. Personal bias, lack of sensitivity (or over sensitivity) to the context and variables within it, as well as communication and interviewing skills may affect the quality and reliability of data.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Research in education falls into the field of the social and behavioural sciences, and as such the object of research is human behaviour (Huysamen 1994: 179). Permission to carry out the research was obtained from the principal of the school in which the research took place. All interviewees were informed of the research project and permission was obtained to use the information gained in the project. All identifying information was deleted to protect those involved in the study. However, since the research was mainly of an observational nature and no interventions or procedures were used, the ethical considerations are kept to a minimum that is, protecting the identity of the 'subjects' observed and procuring their permission to use this information.

3.6 Summary

The theoretical basis for the research methodology was discussed in this chapter.

The qualitative nature of the research and case study format allowed the researcher to describe and study the assessment process as it occurred in the classroom. This process as well as the method of data collection and data analysis procedures was examined. The validity of the study and ethical considerations were discussed.

The research outcomes and discussion follow in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

Research Outcomes and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter gave a detailed description of the design and methodology used to conduct the study, gather and analyse data.

The research findings will be reported in full, evaluated and discussed in this chapter.

4.2 Research Findings

4.2.1 Document search

This search relates to the examination of the paper trail that is peculiar to an organisation that is, policy documents, reports, correspondence *etcetera*. While there is no documented policy on assessment in the system, documents examined revealed a clear process to be followed for identifying and assessing individuals with specific educational needs. Although the need for “appropriate assessments to answer specific instructional questions” is noted, the actual process of classroom based assessment and its expected outcomes are not specified.

Reports, however, are detailed and clearly indicate the skills learners are expected to gain in each subject as well as the attitudes and behaviour they should strive towards.

4.2.1.1 Assessment policy

As mentioned above, no formal documented curriculum or assessment policy was found in the document search at the school.

However, the educational goal of the five-school institution is expressed as follows in the schools' policy document "to offer a...Day School Education to the learners of the ...community with the support of families and the community. Enabling students to achieve the goals of human and social development within a framework of their religious and cultural heritage is a responsibility shared by schools, families and the community and these goals apply to ALL students, including those with special needs". This declaration can be used broadly as a curriculum statement.

Educators are responsible for drawing up the work schemes that constitute the curriculum, the curricula outcomes and modes of assessment, as well as the assessment criteria for the subjects (learning areas) they teach. This is done individually or in teams depending on the subject area. Usually, though, the teachers from a specific grade or subject area will collaborate on the drawing up of work schemes and assessments. The 'learning team' (which looks after the needs of the LSEN learners) input and support is usually sought only at the implementation 'phase', that is when a test/project needs to be modified for a learner.

The school has a detailed report, which to a large extent serves as a 'regulator' for the curriculum (and assessment) by indicating the specific skills that are desired for each subject area (see Appendix C).

4.2.1.2 The school report

There has been an on-going debate around the school report. Some teachers feel the present report is misleading, and not understood by the parents. The reason for this they feel is because it does not reflect any marks or symbols (unlike the other schools in the five-school family). The qualitative remarks that appear on the report are carefully worded texts which try to convey as accurate a picture as possible of the learner while keeping the remarks as positive as

possible. There have been occasions where remarks have been misinterpreted by parents.

Marks/symbols are only reflected on the mark schedules and cumulative record cards, and are kept mainly for record-keeping purposes. There has also been debate recently around the nature of these marks. The issue of 'authenticity' was raised at a phase meeting. There is apparently no consistency with regard to the composition of the marks. Some teachers carry forward a cumulative mark (that is, the end mark from the previous cycle as the first mark for the next cycle). This has not been done across the board though, as practices differ from one subject to the next. In social studies, for instance, themes are taught in blocks and written off at the end of a cycle. Whereas in mathematics work previously covered is included in the assessment in an ongoing manner. The mark at the end of a cycle thus represents a cycle mark for social studies and a cumulative year mark for mathematics.

This issue was illustrated by a recent incident. A learner, who had arrived at the beginning of the school year from a neighbouring government school, had performed poorly almost across the board during the year. There appeared to be huge gaps in his knowledge in certain subjects. In social studies he had shown steady progress though and obtained a good mark in the recent assessment cycle. The class teacher reflected this mark on the schedule. Some teachers felt that the mark was not a true reflection of his capabilities and that an average of the year mark would be more authentic. The class teacher however disagreed. She felt firstly, that his progress is a true reflection of his ability and secondly, that recording the most recent marks is the norm for social studies. This raises again the question of purpose in assessment. What are we assessing and reflecting?

The marks on the mark schedule are therefore not consistent and in some instances represent different processes. Consensus was not reached on which

process to follow. The principal commented that the inconsistencies were due in part to the fact that there were two parallel systems working at present. It is envisaged that these processes will converge in the future.

The same type of concern was raised regarding the marks of learners with special education needs (LSEN). In some cases marks have been modified or are the result of a modified programme and therefore have a different composition to other marks in the class. Teachers also feel that the qualitative nature of the report doesn't reflect the true status of the learner especially in relation to her peers. They feel that weak learners and their parents don't get the true picture, whereas if the marks were included these would speak for themselves.

It is interesting to note that teachers often equate learning difficulties with weakness and lack of intelligence and often, academic expectations are lowered for these learners instead of eradicating or limiting the effect of the difficulty. This may require something as simple as changing the format of assessment.

4.2.2 Literature review

The literature review revealed a number of recurring themes regarding the nature of assessment. Themes that emerged from the literature include:

- link between learning and assessment
- context of learning is important
- the educator's role in learning and assessment
- assessment can have a negative effect on learning
- assessment is an emotional experience
- many purposes to assessments
- assumptions about learning affect how we assess
- teaching, learning and assessment are part of the same process and interact
- assessment is not an objective process

- need for diverse forms of assessment
- the education process (teaching-learning-assessing) is cyclical
- assessment has implications for educator, learner, parent
- feedback from assessment is important

Some of these themes re-surfaced in the other research data. The following were identified in the research process (reference is made to examples in the data, see Appendix B):

- assessment is an emotive experience
- the purpose of assessment (Learner B, line 30, 38, 50; Learner C, line 60)
- the effect of assessment (Learner B, line 63-65)
- inaccuracy of assessment (Learner C, line 37)
- reporting the results (Teacher Y, line 60)
- feedback (Teacher Y, line 45-50)
- the role of the educator (Teacher X, line 38 & 51-53)
- what is assessed
- link between assessment and learning

These themes when consolidated can be reduced into a number of broad categories, for example:

- Purpose of Assessment
- Reporting on Assessment
- Role Players in Assessment
- Relationships in Assessment
- Process of Assessment
- The Effect of Assessment

The data from the research study can be analysed and sorted into these categories.

4.2.3 Observation of the assessment process

The process of assessment was observed in the classroom in order to establish the methods used by educators to collect information about the learners. Firstly, the whole process was explored to see how assessment works in the classroom. Then, assessment was looked at from the individual learner's point of view.

4.2.3.1 Classroom based assessment

The assessment process occurs on a cyclical basis during a school year. There are typically four cycles during the year. The first, a general assessment culminates in a Progress Report and occurs during the first school term. Assessment in the other three cycles are more in depth and provide specific information on the various subjects as well as information on a wider 'cultural' aspect. The educators collect assessment data over a period of time and conduct classroom assessments on a continuous basis. The results of these are recorded and discussed at a schedule meeting of all educators concerned. The final results are communicated to the parents in qualitative form on a report. This is followed by a conference between the educator and the parent(s). At the year-end a hand-over meeting is arranged with the educator(s) to whom the learners will be moving. The results of assessments as well as other pertinent (emotional, behavioural and special educational need) information is passed on to the new teachers.

The researcher's observations revealed various procedures in the assessment process. This process was artificially divided into five procedural stages (see Figure 4.1) by me in order to facilitate a closer examination of the process. These 'stages' are described below.

- Stages in the assessment process

- ❖ *Stage 1: Gathering information.*

- Information about the learner is gathered in a number of ways. These include assessments across the continuum, from classroom observations, formal and

informal tests, projects, group work, individual work and oral presentations. Information gathered is not only of an academic nature but includes attitude to work, work habits, social interaction and extra curricular activities as well.

Assessment is continuous and arrived at by many different methods (a remark by a teacher in informal conversation). Teachers usually use tests that fit their practical circumstances, there is thus often a tendency to re-use familiar assessment formats or actual tests (that is, tests drawn up in previous years). The teachers generally develop formal and informal tests themselves, although standardized tests (which are externally sourced) such as the Mathematics and English Biathlons are used for assessment purposes.

❖ *Stage 2: Interpreting information*

Once the teacher has gathered enough information she analyzes and interprets it according to chosen criteria. These criteria may be norm-referenced, criterion-referenced or ipsative/self-referenced (see 1.8.1). Usually tests set are marked according to a memorandum provided by the teacher setting the test. Projects are marked according to rubrics, which have been discussed with learners beforehand. Most subject teachers collaborate with regard to these criteria. A value is placed on the resultant gathered information (that is, marks are allocated) and it is recorded. A range of scores (a distribution) is provided for the teachers to use during assessment cycles. Learners' marks are adjusted so those scores fall within these parameters. However, qualitative remarks replace test scores and grades (on the reports).

❖ *Stage 3: Teacher's response to information*

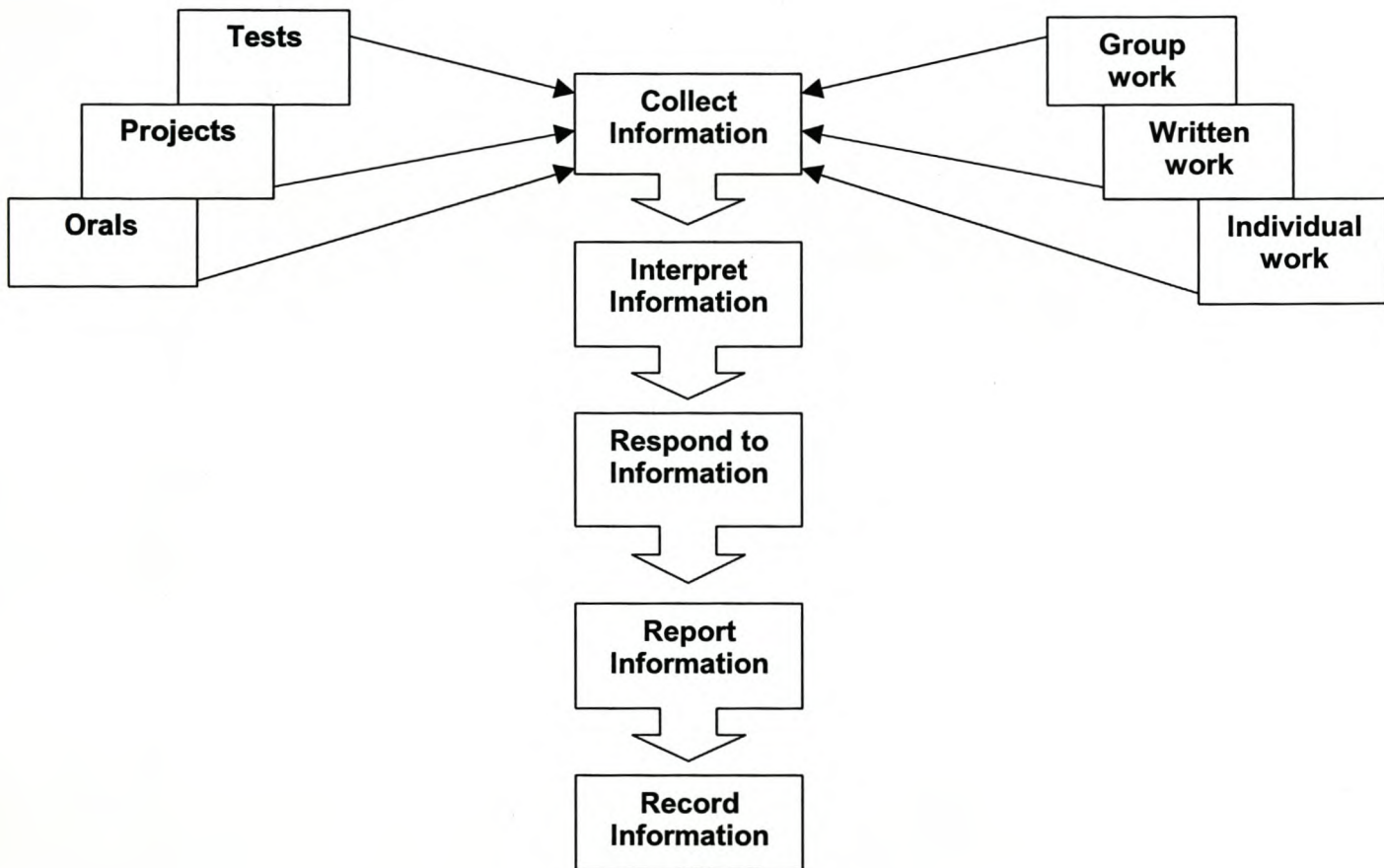
The information obtained from assessments *may* be fed back to the learner in the form of a grade and/or a remark. Although this is possibly the most important stage of the assessment process for the learner, she is often left out of the communication loop.

The teacher's response to the assessment is fed back to colleagues at the various subject meetings, schedule meetings or case conferences and to the parents through the report or parent-teacher meetings. Seldom is the same level of feedback given to the learner across all subject areas.

The outcomes of some assessments are fed back to learners. Learners usually get direct feedback on orals, projects or group work. The results of class tests and problem solving assessments in mathematics are not always fed back to learners. The reason given for this was that learners often do badly and it would affect their self-esteem negatively if they received poor results.

Figure 4.1

Assessment Process



❖ *Stage 4: Collaboration and the collective response*

After interpreting the data gathered and formulating her response to this, the teacher presents her findings quantitatively and qualitatively to a meeting (schedule meeting) of colleagues involved with the education of the learners. These colleagues include subject teachers, the school counsellor, the SENCO (special education needs co-ordinator) and the chairperson (who may be a head of department or the principal). The schedule meetings conclude every cycle. Each learner in every class is looked at briefly in terms of functioning, abilities and progress. The learner is discussed and strategies for extension or support are explored (this may be done at the schedule meeting or at a follow up). Depending on the nature of the support, the SENCO or Social Worker follows up, convening another meeting if necessary to consider a plan of action.

The quantitative results are recorded on a mark schedule and the qualitative remarks in a record book or other similar format and on the report. Both sets of results and the learner's progress or lack thereof are discussed within their own individual context. Intervention and follow up strategies are also discussed and recorded. A general cumulative remark (qualitative assessment) which is a composite of all teachers' input is formulated and recorded along with other individual subject remarks on the learner's report.

❖ *Stage 5: Reporting the response*

The report, which is sent to the parents, is a qualitative response to the assessment process. The mark schedule, which is filed in the principal's office and kept for record-keeping purposes, is a quantitative response to the assessment process. There is thus a parallel assessment system operating at the school.

Feedback from the assessment process is given to parents at the parent-teacher conference, which follows the issuing of the report. Parents have the

opportunity to meet with some or all of the teachers, as well as with the principal and members of the learning support team, to discuss their learner's progress. The learner is seldom present at these discussions. In fact, learners are discouraged from attending. This completes the assessment process.

The 'handover' meeting (which takes place either the end of the previous year or in the first few days of the new academic year), could in actual fact be seen as the beginning of the assessment process. At this meeting the class teachers (present and future), the SENCO, support teachers and social worker meet to hand over the class to the new teacher. All relevant information (background, academic and learning needs etc.) is passed on and briefly discussed.

4.2.3.2 Individual assessment (An example of the process)

Three learners drawn from the sample (Grade 6) were interviewed and their assessments and reports scrutinized in order to gauge the effects of the assessment process on individual learners. The relevant data for these learners can be found in Appendix C.

The assessment process is the same for all learners. However learners experiencing specific difficulties are assisted through the modification of certain assessments in order to support the learner in the process. The modification of assessments range from enlarging the font of question papers, reading questions to learners, putting tests onto tape, providing extra time to write tests, to writing in a separate venue. Where necessary specific accommodations may apply, that is, assessments may be simplified by altering the language or question format (this is usually a last resort and reserved for learners on an Individual Education Programme [IEP]).

Interestingly, although no assistance is given on the actual assessment, teachers in general assume that this is what happens. They often refer to these instances as “when you helped so-and-so on the test”.

- Learner A

This learner is probably one of the weaker learners in Grade 6. Although this learner experiences significant difficulties in the classroom, she is resistant to overt help and intervention. Assistance received is limited to clarification of instructions and questions, as well as teacher discretion when marking assignments and work. The effects of assessment are difficult to ascertain, as the learner is reluctant to discuss the subject. Her behaviour and lack of response in the interview is perhaps an indication of her negative experience of assessment. She did not have a clear understanding of the assessment process or of the outcomes.

- Learner B

The assessment process and format remained intact for this learner. This learner had some reservations about and frustrations with the assessment process (see Appendix B interview (b) lines 11, 13, 14 & 63-65). He was very aware of his non-'A' student status and felt that the teachers did not really know him.

- Learner C

A bright, sensitive learner who experiences a number of difficulties in the classroom situation. He receives significant support in the education and assessment process, yet consistently ‘fails to achieve’. His frustration with the assessment process is clearly expressed in the interview (see Appendix B interview (a) line 67-70). He was confused and frustrated with the process especially about the uncertainty of what was actually being assessed. He also did not think that the teachers’ knew him or his capabilities well (see Appendix B interview (a) line 37-38).

4.2.4 Interviews

The questions asked in the interviews actually originated from questions that arose as a result of reading the literature, as well as those that came out of the observation process itself. The development of the interview guides was challenging. It was difficult to phrase the questions in a way that elicited the required information and kept the questions open-ended. Care also needed to be taken to phrase questions in an unambiguous manner. Another difficulty encountered was covering the topic as widely as possible without leading the interviewee and having the questions overlapping too much.

The interview guides (see Appendix B) were broadly subdivided into two sections. One covers the assessment aspect and the other dealt with inclusion.

Questions that guided the interview include:

What is assessment?

What is inclusion?

What is assessed?

Why do we assess?

Are there different types of assessment?

When do we use what?

Is there an assessment process?

What is the function of assessment?

The questions were not asked as they appeared in the interview guide or in the same order, but were merely used to steer (guide) the process. The participant's response dictated the question order and format.

The learners in the study were interviewed first (see transcripts in Appendix B). Unfortunately (or fortunately) this happened shortly after they had received the first cycle report. The learners were thus still fairly fixated on the reports and assessments; this was especially true of learner C.

It was difficult interviewing them as many attempts to get the learners to elaborate or elucidate responses were interpreted as an attempt to get them to respond 'correctly'. On more than one occasion I had to reassure them that there was not a 'correct' response. Wanting to give the 'correct' response is a relic of the traditional assessment approach, where content was important and the need to establish what content was required led to a constant search for clues to what was needed in order to supply the 'correct' response.

The interviewing process particularly intimidated learner A. She was nervous and anxious throughout the interview, and I eventually had to terminate it. Part of the nervousness was due to an eagerness to please, and some because she was not sure whether there was in fact another purpose to the exercise. This response is in fact typical of this learner. She has devised a strategy that is, not to comment! She uses this strategy all the time especially in the classroom.

It was easier to conduct the teacher interviews. However, I felt that the younger teacher's responses were not entirely 'authentic'. She, too, appeared to want to give the 'correct' responses. This feeling hampered the interview to a certain extent.

It is interesting to note that although the interviews were guided by the same questions for the different 'categories' of participants, each interview had its own dynamic. This is not uncommon in research involving people, especially qualitative research.

One of the participants, learner C, was convinced that the entire research study was focused on him.

4.3 Analysis and Discussion of Findings

4.3.1 The assessment policy and process

Although the school in the study has a unitary assessment 'policy' in place (that is, an undocumented understanding that assessment will be continuous and largely qualitative), in effect each campus differs as a result of the 'ideology' (and interpretation) of those in charge at the different campuses. Broadfoot (1996:7-9) comments on the fact that assessment is not only about judging individual performance and potential but also about judging institutional quality. However this judging is done, she says, whoever has the power to determine the criteria against which assessments are made, has the power to influence the priorities pursued by teachers, parents and learners. For example, although there is an inclusive policy in place, two of the three primary school campuses still continue to reflect scores on the reports despite an agreement, and almost in opposition to it, to have a qualitative approach to reports! So too the differing 'ideologies' of the teachers involved in the process impact the approach to assessment in general in the classroom.

Despite this the school has a progressive assessment structure in place, and if used creatively it can have far-reaching positive effects.

4.3.1.1 Collecting and interpreting information

Although a continuous assessment approach is espoused at the school in the study, and a variety of assessment modes are used in the classroom; the results obtained from these are not all used. For example, marks from projects are seldom used as teachers feel learners get help at home so it is not a true reflection of their ability or work.

According to Vygotsky's view of learning (see 2.2.2), learning takes place within social interaction between the learner and her peers, parents and educators. Surely then the learning that takes place as a result of interactions between

parent and learner, such as on projects, is as important as classroom learning? If teachers are afraid that there may be too much parental input, they can control for this through the rubrics. Feuerstein's concept of mediated learning (see 2.2.2) and the importance of mediators sees mediators as imparting meaning and significance to learning experiences. If teachers dismiss these interactions during projects as meaningless (which is implied when marks are not used), what message is this imparting to the learner? That meaningful experiences only take place in the classroom? Surely learning is part of and the result of the project process, and isn't this what assessment is about? Measuring learning and performance, that is, growth and development.

Another practice that is confusing in the light of the progressive assessment process, is the adjusting of marks according to a predetermined range of scores. If marks do not conform to the teachers' expectations (or range of scores provided) they are adapted by either lowering or raising the scores. This is very much linked to the idea of a normal distribution curve and normative assessment. The theory behind the normal distribution proposes that any scores on a norm-based assessment will conform to a normal distribution curve. That is, scores are evenly distributed along a continuum with fewer scores at the extreme ends of the distribution and the bulk of the scores being distributed around the mean or average. This influence comes from the traditional notion of IQ linked scores as discussed by Horton (see 1.3). Note the views of Freeman and Lewis in this regard (see 1.8.1). Using the normal distribution curve restricts the learner to the parameters of this distribution. Individual performance is thus dependent on the group performance. Neither of these fit the continuous assessment approach used, which is a more formative approach, or the commitment to inclusive education. Why can't learners' scores remain as they are even if they fall outside of the 'normal distribution' curve? Isn't this what inclusion is about? Not scores, but actual individual performance at a level pegged by individual need and capacity.

In many ways, despite its progressive nature, the school thus still supports the medical model and traditional approach to assessment.

4.3.1.2 Responding to and reporting information

Many teachers see the report as the end of the assessment process. The parent or school is often seen as the 'client' in this transaction and therefore the destination of results from assessment. The cycle however should only be complete when there is feedback into the system that is, to the learners (the real 'clients' in the education transaction) and into the learning context. If learning is to take place this is essential. In fact the more immediate the feedback the greater the impact on the learner, so waiting for the report to get results is actually already too late for feedback (see 2.5.4).

Feedback from the report and assessment process should be used as the starting point for planning the new cycle's work. It should inform future practice, that is, the assessment outcomes should be fed back into the system as learning objectives. In this way, says Cullingford (1997:142), assessment is part of the learning process itself and does not detract from teaching and learning. In effect the educator is the agent of change in the education process. Information gained from the assessment process is invaluable to improving teaching and assessment practice. The teacher should be engaged in a continuous cycle of reflecting on and improving her practice.

4.3.2 The research process

The research process was meaningful in that the main issues that emerged from the study seem to be universal. Themes that emerged in the research linked with themes from the literature review. Not only have the same frustrations surfaced across the globe it seems but also across classrooms, both regular and inclusive.

4.3.2.1 Purpose of assessment

Earlier in the study (see 2.3) it was noted that the crux of the debate in educational assessment centred on the purpose of assessment and the need to

change the way assessment is viewed. Many educators worldwide seem confused about the purpose of assessment. A wide range of purposes were identified (see 2.5.1). Gipps for example identified six purposes of assessment namely: screening, diagnosis, record-keeping, feedback on performance, certification and selection. She also proposed that the prime purpose of assessment at primary level was to support the teaching and learning process.

The purpose of assessment according to Curriculum 2005 and the SA National Qualifications Framework (SAQA) is personal growth and development.

The school in which the research study was conducted sees the purpose of education (and therefore assessment) as “human and social development within a framework of religious and cultural heritage”. This goal fits well with that of Curriculum 2005, and if one looks at the outcomes of the assessment process at the school in the study they are compatible with the purposes identified by Gipps. The only element missing is feedback, although this is done in certain areas.

Despite the documented goal however, educators at the school are also confused about the purpose of assessment (see Appendix B interview (e) lines 59-62, 65-67; interview (d) lines 42-46), as are the learners. Learner A in the study was totally confused about the assessment process and purpose. She was unable for instance to identify the source of information for reports or for that matter what assessment was. Learners B and C, although not quite sure, had a better understanding of the process and were able to identify a few purposes of assessment (see Appendix B interview (a), lines 58 & 60; & interview (b), lines 31-33 & 38-39).

There is a need, I feel, for teachers to reclaim their classrooms and to use assessment as a tool in the educator’s ‘toolkit’. Teachers should for example, look carefully at the needs of learners identified by assessment and respond to this by either changing the instruction style, or the assessment format.

4.3.2.2 Relationships in education

A number of important relationships in education were identified in the study. The most important being the relationship between teacher and learner. Vygotsky (see 2.2.2) noted that learning takes place in social interaction. If that interaction is marred by poor relationships between learners and educators, how much learning can take place? Seidel also indicated (in 2.5.2) that teaching and learning (and therefore assessment) are an interaction. The relationship between educator and learner will determine much of the success in these interactions. Respect, which can only be built on a good relationship, is critical for a mutually beneficial relationship. This is very apparent in educator-learner interactions. When there is a good relationship based on respect education thrives. One can often gauge the relationship between educator and learner by the success in a subject. Learners don't work well where relationships are strained with educators. Another important relationship is the one between assessment, learning and self-esteem or self-worth. When a learner does well she feels good about herself, however when results are poor the learner usually feels badly. As long as ranking is important in education this will be a problem area. Where 'A' learners' are seen as superior to others, the self-worth of the majority of learners is at risk. According to Cullingford (1997: 271) the sense of failure expressed by so many learners derives from their comparisons of themselves to others and from their failure to keep up with norms and standards. Broadfoot (see 2.5.2) who suggested that learners were conditioned into accepting and internalising the negativity of assessments echoed this sentiment earlier in this study. Learner B's response (in line 8) is an example of this "its not like top A student report, but it's fairly good". This learner is in fact one of the 'top' learners in the class, but feels his lack of 'A' status diminishes him! He felt compelled to comment on this aspect of his report, why? This is even more powerful if one remembers that no marks are used in reports. When the work of learners is valued and accepted this will change (see 2.5.2).

Although a caring and committed teacher who supports inclusion Mrs. Y's careless comments (see Appendix B interview (e), line 25,26 and 33) "...after a few weeks, I can give you a very clear indication of the levels of competence in the class. Nothing much changes in the course of the year", and "really a fifty-percenter will always be a fifty-percenter" sums up much of the attitude of educators in general. Cullingford (1997: 20) refers to this as the 'halo' effect where an educator subconsciously marks the learner's work according to previous perceptions of performance. This may lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy that is, learners living up (or down) to educators' perceptions of them. The debate regarding the consistency of marks (in 4.2.5) is pertinent. When a learner perceived as weak did well, teachers felt the marks did not reflect a true picture of the learner. Educators in general often without thought artificially peg learners in this manner.

4.3.2.3 Reporting on assessment

Traditionally the results of assessments are reported to parents, the principal (who represents the school body) and in the case of exit examinations to the education ministry and society at large. In this instance reporting is limited to the first two. Two of the three learners interviewed felt that feedback from assessments could be useful. The results of assessment could have a positive influence and help with goal setting (interview (b) line 51) for example, but teachers did not always "help us ...in the best form" (interview (a) line 117-118). They are correct, in fact the entire process should be about the learners. According to Freeman and Lewis learners need information in order to inform action and sustain motivation (2.5.4). They contend that teachers and learners are the most important recipients of feedback from assessment, as they are the one's who need to initiate action! This is in sharp contrast to Mrs.Y's attitude to feedback with regard to learners. Although she is in favour of feedback from written assessments, she doesn't think feedback is relevant to "kids who do really badly!" (line 45-50). This confirms, for me, the confusion that teachers have regarding the purpose of assessments.

4.3.2.4 Role-players in assessment

There are a number of role players in assessment according to the literature reviewed. These include the learner, the teacher, the school, the parents, education as a whole (represented by the ministry of education) and society at large (represented mainly by industry). Freeman and Lewis pointed out (in 2.5.4) that in fact learners and teachers were the most important role players in education and assessment. Sadly, the learner is probably still the most neglected role player in the assessment process and is often not consulted about or involved in the process except in a passive receptive way. The new national curriculum, Curriculum 2005 and its continuous assessment approach promises to change the status quo.

A concerted effort is being made to include the learner in the process at the school in the study. Learners are being given the opportunity on a more regular basis to contribute to the process.

Educators, too, need to be more involved in the process especially in planning assessment and the curriculum. As Torrance pointed out (in 2.5.2) teachers have a key role to play in the implementation of new assessment methods. The teachers at the school in the study have an advantage over other teachers in this respect. They determine the curriculum (work schemes) and are therefore perfectly poised to change the assessment process.

4.3.2.5 Process of assessment

Assessment is in a state of flux both at the school in the study and in the country (as it is worldwide). The advent of a new national curriculum and a new approach to assessment has had repercussions in the education system. If teachers were confused previously about assessment, this has intensified.

The absence of a documented curriculum and assessment approach at the school has also had a negative impact on the teachers, adding to the frustration

levels in general in education. Somehow teachers at the chalk-face are expected to make sense of what is happening and muddle through. Fortunately for the school in the research study, a fairly progressive structure is in place for assessment and teachers are able to effect change if they take up the challenge mentioned in the previous section.

4.4 Summary

The research findings were listed, analysed and discussed in this chapter.

A number of themes emerged across the research study. These were condensed into a handful of categories, namely:

- purpose of assessment
- reporting on assessment
- role players in assessment
- relationships in assessment
- the process of assessment and
- the effect of assessment,

which were further analysed and discussed.

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapters set out the purpose of this study, and traced the topic in the literature, outlined the research design and methodology and discussed the research findings of a qualitative study done at a private primary school.

This chapter seeks to draw together the many threads and hopefully present (in summary form) an authentic picture of the assessment process in an inclusive classroom.

5.2 Summary of Research and Findings

This study set out to explore the assessment process in an inclusive classroom using a qualitative case study approach. The intention was to address the following research questions:

- ❖ How are learners assessed in an inclusive classroom?
- ❖ What is the assessment process?
- ❖ How is the information recorded and used?
- ❖ How does the assessment process affect the learner?

5.2.1 How is assessment done in the inclusive classroom?

Although the school in the study (as a private organization) does not officially follow the OBE system of education or the Outcomes Based Assessment (OBA) model, its influence is felt and there are many similarities. A continuous assessment approach is followed for the main part. Teachers use a variety of assessment methods to gauge their learners' progress in a cycle. Assessments

consist of informal evaluations, written tests, oral presentations, and individual and group projects. Where circumstances warrant it, assessments are modified to the needs of particular learners.

5.2.2 What is the assessment process?

The assessment process is the same for all learners and has five distinct stages (see 4.2.3.1). It must be noted that these 'stages' have been created by the researcher in order to: (a) distinguish the various steps in the assessment process and (b) enable the researcher to explore and examine the various processes that make up assessment in the classroom. The stages identified include:

Stage 1: Gathering information.

Stage 2: Interpreting information

Stage 3: Teacher's response

Stage 4: Collaboration and the collective response

Stage 5: Reporting the response

5.2.3 How is the information recorded and used?

The results of the assessments are recorded in both a quantitative and qualitative form.

The various teachers on their respective mark schedules record the quantitative results (marks). The class teacher on a class schedule records the results and averages of the various subjects as well as the overall class average. Only the teachers and principal see these results (although the learners know some individual marks). The various schedules are then filed in the principal's office and used primarily at the schedule meetings.

The qualitative results are recorded on the individual learner reports, which are sent to the parents. Primarily the teachers, school and parents use this information to gauge the progress of learners. The results of assessments are not directly accessible to the learners. If a learner is experiencing difficulties,

either the social worker or the SENCO follows up and a case conference is arranged with all educators to discuss the issues and investigate the source of the difficulties. If solutions cannot be found within the school and class environment, and further intervention is required a meeting is called with the parents, if this has not already been discussed at the parent-teacher conference.

5.2.4 How does the assessment process affect the learner?

Both learners and parents are invited to comment on the report, in a space provided for this purpose. Learners are also encouraged to discuss their feelings about and response to their reports with their teachers or a member of the learning support team. However, I feel, these are token efforts to include the learners in the process. Many learners especially those experiencing difficulties are extremely frustrated with the assessment process. They feel (like learner C) that the assessment process discriminates against them and often feel like victims of the process.

5.3 Recommendations

A shift in attitude is needed from the teacher on two levels. Firstly, from seeing teaching, learning and assessing as a linear process to seeing it as cyclical (with assessment informing both teaching and learning); and secondly, from seeing inclusion as essentially a learner-based approach to seeing it as a systemic approach.

- Classroom strategies for teachers

Many teachers feel dis-empowered by the assessment debate and process. They need not be. Research has shown that experienced teachers usually know intuitively what is required in their classroom. They know the learners and know what needs to be done. As Mrs.Y noted in her interview the assessments she did for herself, namely the more informal assessments were invaluable to her teaching (see Appendix B line 11-12 & 36). Teachers need to empower

themselves by exploring and cultivating new classroom strategies and taking charge of their classroom practice.

- The assessment process

The assessment process at the school is progressive but is not used to its full potential. Looking at the various protocols discussed in the literature review (2.5.2) it seems to me that we should turn our assessment process on its head with the collaborative input at the interpretative stage as opposed to just the responsive stage.

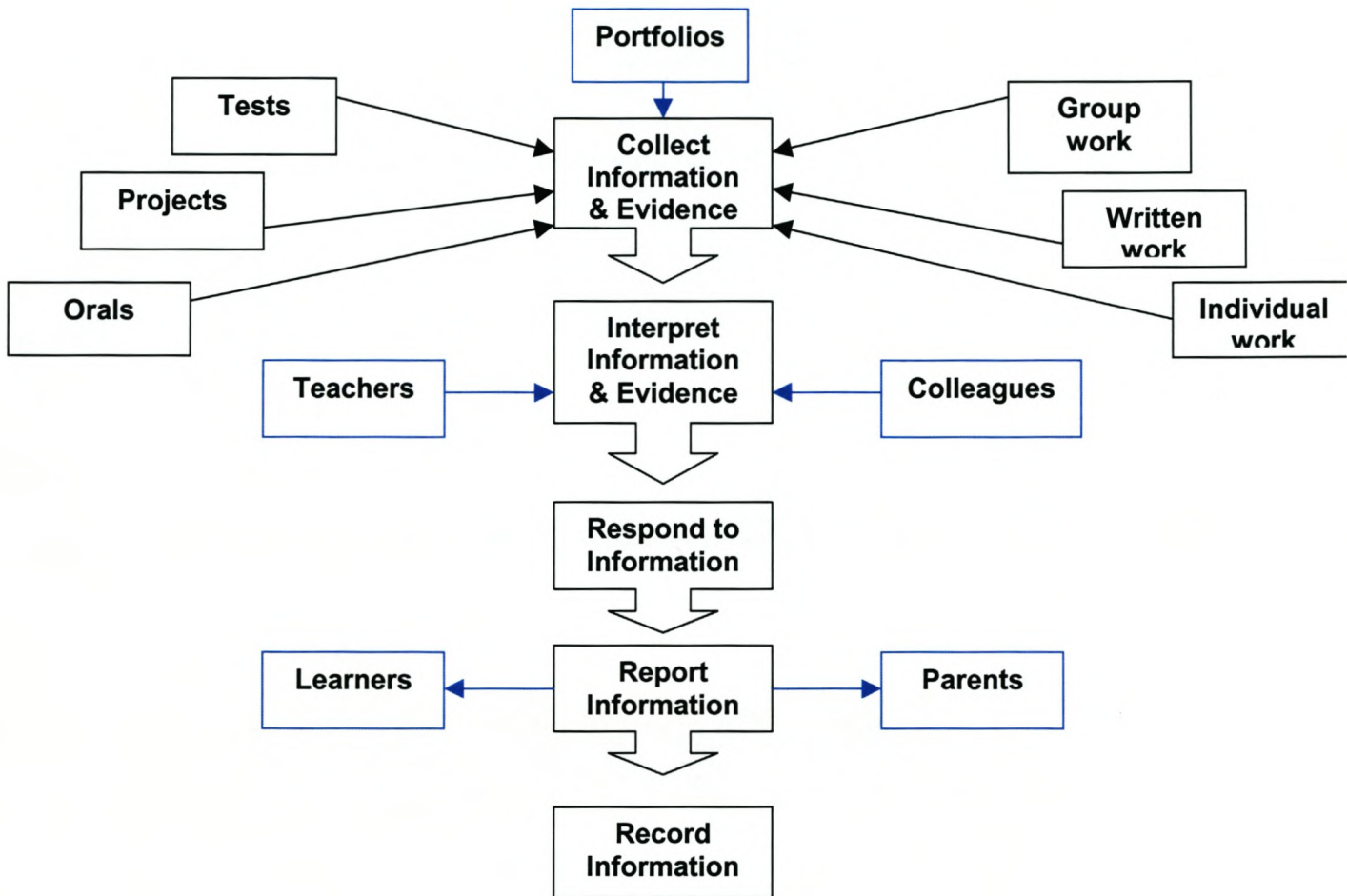
Instead of having the collaborative input at the end of the process as a response to assessment (see 4.2.3.1, Figure 4.1), we should move it forward (see Figure 5.1). It could then be used as a collaborative assessment tool in the process that is, interpreting and responding to assessment and learners' work (this could also counteract the 'halo' effect). The school could start off on a small scale using this process for LSEN learners then gradually expand it to include all learners. In this way we could also introduce portfolio assessments which are part of the continuous assessment approach. No major restructuring would be needed as we already have a structure in place that could quite easily be manipulated.

- Curriculum planning and assessment

Teachers and schools need to plan for assessment. It is as important a part of education as teaching. Stephens and Izard (1992: 2) note that "comprehensive curriculum planning consists of making three major choices: content/syllabus; how that content will be encountered by the learner that is, the choice of pedagogical experiences; and evaluation of the learning that is, the choice of assessment styles". As mentioned previously, teachers at the school in the study are in a favourable position to take control of this process. Teachers need to be proactive and plan for diversity both in teaching methods and assessments.

Figure 5.1

New Assessment Process



NOTE:

The blue lines indicate the difference between Figure 4.1 and Figure 5.1, indicating the new approach to assessment.

- Feedback

The importance of feedback was discussed earlier in this study (see 2.5.4). It was noted that feedback is a two-way process and that learners should be given the opportunity to respond to feedback received indicating for example on its usefulness. Teachers need to take this aspect of assessment seriously if they want to establish and improve authentic relationships. The form the feedback takes will depend on the type of assessment done. Individual feedback is preferable for individual assessments such as essays where the teacher can address the learner directly either verbally or through a written remark. Group feedback will be more feasible for orals or projects, for example, where the teacher can address the class or group as whole and comment on common areas of strength and/or weakness.

- Role of the teacher

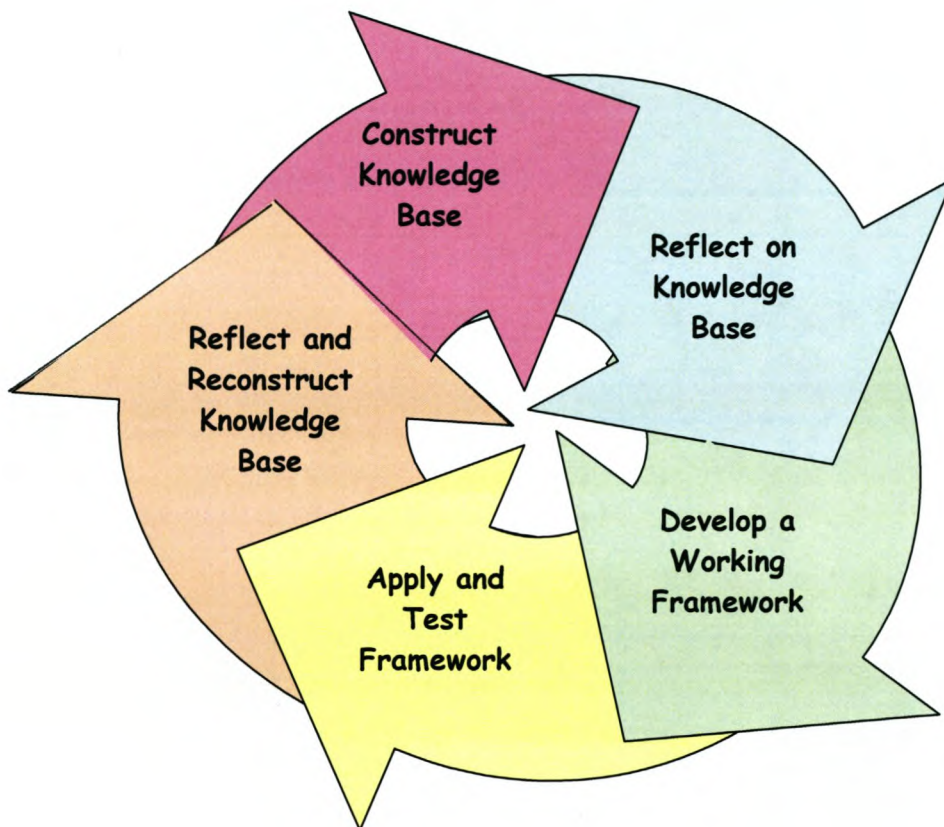
The research has indicated that the teacher needs to be a change agent in the education process. This means that she must be proactive and responsive to the dynamic classroom environment. The most powerful tool in her toolkit is the question “Why?” She should be unafraid to question existing norms and practices. Why perpetuate a tradition that makes no sense? The teacher needs to take control of the classroom and integrate the various functions, as each aspect of the education process interacts with and informs the other.

Her main task is to develop an understanding of learners’ work. She therefore needs to examine and reflect on their work in order to develop an understanding of it and the learner. Only through this activity will she be able to develop the capacity to support the learners in her class.

The teacher also needs to continually reflect on her practice and adapt or change, as the circumstances require it. No process is set in stone. Education is a dynamic process, which demands a dynamic response. The teacher should

thus be in a continuous cycle of reflecting on current practice and reconstructing future practice (see Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2 **Teacher as Reflective Practitioner**
(Adapted from McCown *et al.* 1996: 16)



▪ Relationships in education

Relationships in education are extremely important. In order to maximise the impact of the education encounter in the classroom, the teacher needs to build authentic relationships with her learners. Relationships based on mutual respect where the value and work of each member is acknowledged.

- Future research

The purpose of schooling is not for our learners to do well at school, but to enable them to do well in life after school. Ways of assessing, what learners know and can do, that are both reliable and sensitive to human diversity is needed. Also needed is a longitudinal study of the effects of assessment on learners, that is, their experience of assessment.

5.4 Limitations of Research

The nature of the research, a qualitative case study, and the context (a private community school) necessarily limits both the application of the findings and the scope of the research. The insights gained and the feedback from the data is thus largely restricted to the school in the case study, however other schools (including those in the five-school system) may be able to use some of the information elicited.

Specific limitations of the study include the restrictions on myself, the researcher, as a staff member. Being a staff member made me privy to information that led to the drawing of certain conclusions that were difficult to substantiate within the context of the study. I am also not entirely happy with the interview guides used for the interviews. Although the guides were just that, *guides*, I feel the phrasing of questions could have been refined, resulting perhaps in more concise and unambiguous questions and therefore richer responses. The drawing up of questionnaires and interview guides is obviously a skill to be honed. Since the data collection processes took place simultaneously it was difficult to step back in order to regain perspective.

Another limitation of the research is the limited exploration of the effects of assessment on learners. A longitudinal study would perhaps reflect the effects of assessment on the learners more effectively.

5.5 Conclusions

Assessment is often seen as a rigid tool for maintaining or setting standards and therefore for measuring performance which is often confused with learning. This has been one of the stumbling blocks in the way of effective learning and teaching. The experience of your own examinations will confirm that measuring performance has very little to do with learning.

The literature reviewed on this topic and the research study points to the fact that assessment is a complex process. It is inextricably woven into the teaching and learning process. When inclusion is added as a dimension, this complexity is highlighted. All learners bring a unique set of circumstances (an experiential world, if you like) to the education process. Whether this uniqueness is language, culture, socio-economic status or learning differences is not the issue. What is important is that we see learners as unique individuals engaging in a process. Learning is not a series of experiences or 'episodes' but a holistic process that is influenced by many factors. Assessment is therefore not just about grading and evaluation but also about understanding (the process and the individual).

The challenge that faces teachers is to assess learners in such a manner that the learner is allowed to access the process without diminishing her future capacity. Realistic goals must be set that do not underestimate the learner's ability or remove all obstacles, that is, one needs to avoid creating a 'learned helplessness'. Learners need enough of a challenge to make learning worthwhile. The teacher must assist the learner without taking away the incentive to achieve in her own right. Each learner must be stretched or extended so that there is progress.

Planning an effective education programme should therefore include planning effective assessment. The two most important questions that need to be asked when planning assessment are:

Why are we assessing?

Who wants to know?

If we clarify the reason for assessing, the assessment process will be clearer. Classroom-based (performance) assessment should be about understanding the learner. Where the learner is situated in the learning process, which areas have been mastered and where the 'gaps' in knowledge or skills are. The teacher also needs to establish what the learner's needs are, so that teaching practice is informed and the real needs can be met. Assessment should be about clarifying and understanding the process of teaching and learning for the teacher and the learner.

"Making an educational experience relevant and meaningful should include making the method of assessment relevant and meaningful as well" (Gilman, Andrew and Rafferty, 1995: 24).

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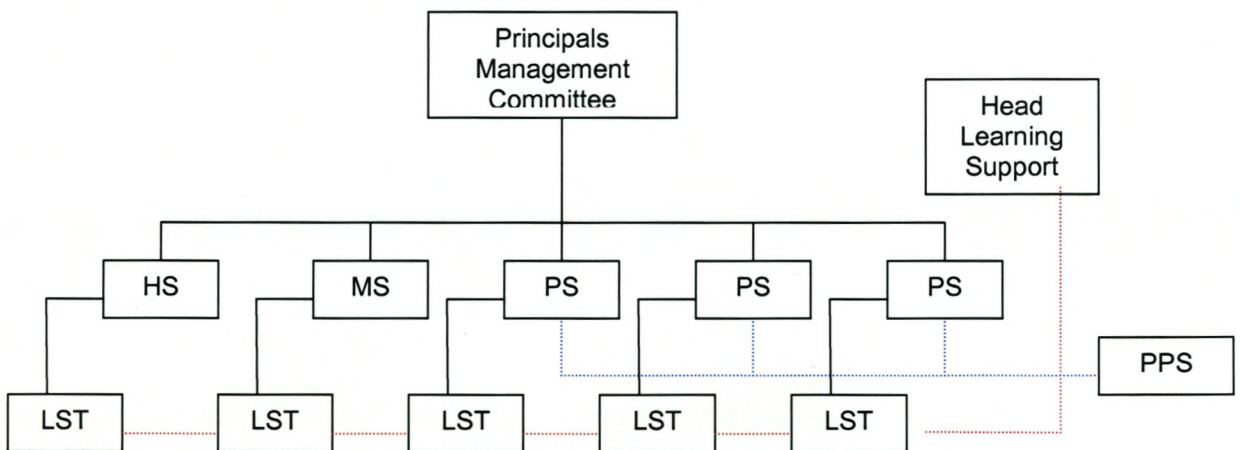
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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Organograms

i. School Structure



KEY:

HS = High School

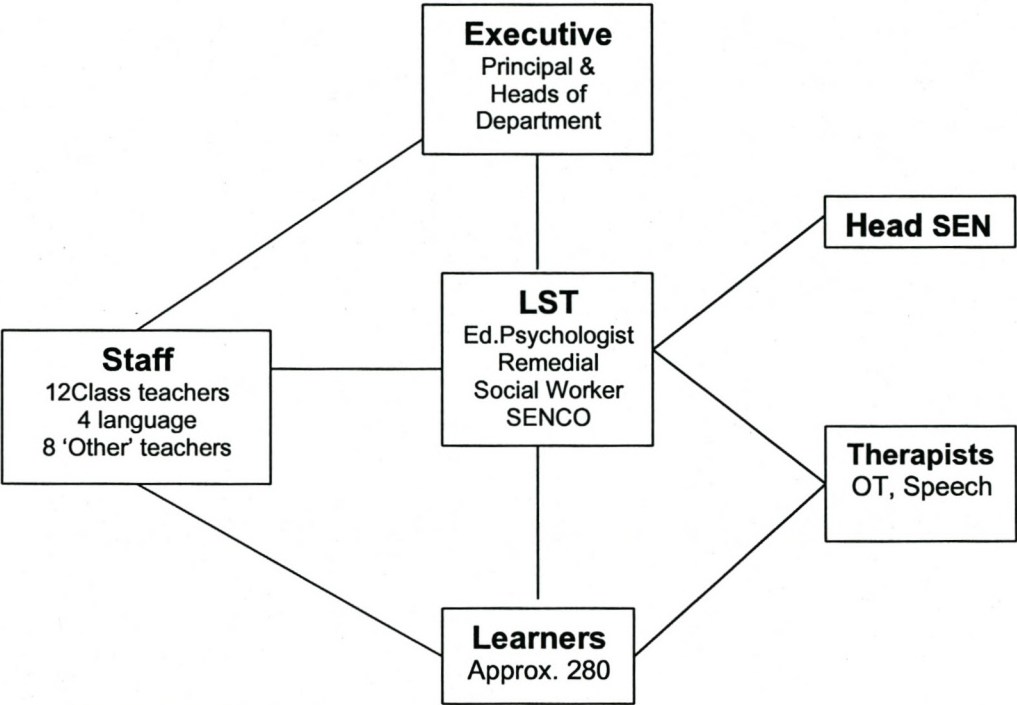
MS = Middle School

PS = Primary School

PPS = Pre-Primary Schools

LST = Learning Support Team

ii. Structure of School in Study



Appendix B: Interviews

i. Interview Guide

LEARNER INTERVIEW GUIDE

- ☐ How do you feel about your reports?
- ☐ Do you think reports accurately reflect what you can and can't do?
- ☐ How do teachers obtain information for reports?
- ☐ What do you think assessment is?
- ☐ Why do teachers assess learners?
- ☐ What is assessment used for?
- ☐ How do teachers assess the learners in your class?
- ☐ Do you think this form of assessment is fair to all?
- ☐ Do assessments help you? Explain.
- ☐ Can you think of other ways teachers can assess learners?
- ☐ How do you feel about assessments?
- ☐ If you could choose, how would you like to be assessed?
- ☐ Should classmates assess each other? Explain.
- ☐ What do you think would be a fair way of assessing learners?

(14)

ii. Transcripts of interviews

(Interviews have been transcribed verbatim, identifying data has been removed)

a) **Learner C (A):**

AK: A, I'm going to ask you a couple of questions. I want you to answer them as honestly as possible. Okay. Answer the questions from your point of view. How it affects you and how you feel.

How do you feel about your report?

A: My school report? I feel that I could have done much better. It was a very bad report.

AK: Why was it a bad report?

A: I didn't do well, in almost every subject.

AK: Do you think that your report accurately reflects what you can and can't do?

A: I...no.

10 AK Do you think it is a true reflection of what you can and can't do?

A: No

AK: No?

A: No.

AK: Explain what you mean.

A: I... no because I wasn't really trying, I didn't really learn for everything during the term. I've started learning for everything and I'm doing really well. So...

AK: In other words you think that at the time the report was done, it was an accurate reflection, it showed what you could and couldn't do?

A: No. If you had to do a report for me this term it would be much better than last term.

20 AK: **How do the teachers' get the information for the reports, do you think?**

A: Well, off my marks, my writing.

AK Okay. **What do you think assessment is?**

A: Assessment is when you...I can't really explain this. Well, when you assess something. You talk to them about something, like what you're doing to me now. You're assessing me.

AK So what does assess mean?

A: When you're talking to someone about...you're saying stuff about them.

AK Are we just talking as in having a conversation? Or is there a purpose to our talking?

A: There's a purpose.

30 AK: What am I trying to do?

A: You're trying to prove that I...I'm better...

AK: But, when I am assessing?

A: You're trying to prove that I'm better without the writing...on the tape.

AK: In other words assessment means I'm trying to get information about you?

A: Yes, assessment is that.

AK: Okay. **Why do you think teachers assess learners?**

A: So they know what they think you can do...because they don't really know. They're trying to tell what they think you can do.

AK: Okay. You say the teachers try and find out what they think you can do?

40 A: Yes.

AK: Do you think they can find out what you can do?

A: No.

AK: No?

A: No.

AK: Why not?

A: No...some people...like today on our test...some people who normally do very badly did very well...and people who usually do very well did very badly...

AK: Why do you think that is?

50 A: Well... umm... some people don't always study. Some people jumped from a three to an eight out of ten. And when I was doing... when I did my first test...I got ten out of twenty...now when I did my second test I got eleven out of fifteen...then when I did my third test, which was today, I got four out of ten. I didn't really learn for the test that we did today.

AK: So...what do you think they're assessing in the tests? Do you think they're assessing how well you can remember?

A: Yes.

AK: How well you study?

A: Yeah... how well you study.

AK Okay. **What do you think assessments are used for?**

60 A: For marks for your report. For when you go to middle school...so it will put you in an English group, or an Afrikaans group or a Maths group and a Hebrew group...

AK: **How do you think the teachers assess the learners in your class?**

A: By the marks and the way that we answer questions.

AK: Do you think this form of assessment is fair to everyone?

A: No.

AK: What do you mean?

70 A: I don't think its fair because, I can't write very easily and people can't really understand my handwriting. I did very, very badly for one test, but I really did learn very hard. I like ... I got less than fifty % I got like thirty nine %. It isn't fair, and I wasn't really happy...because I knew that learnt.

AK: Oh okay. **Do you think assessments help you?**

A: Well... they should. I mean...like we just did now with the tape, with that kind of assessment I'll be okay, but if I write it down...you saw it took me like an extra two minutes.

AK: So they can help you. It depends on how the assessment is done?

A: Yeah..Yeah.

AK Okay. **Can you think of other ways that teachers can assess learners?**

80 A: Well, they could do it on a computer. Or... like they can assess them like they do for do for reports. Or...I'd rather say like a one-to-one thing, it's much better. I don't really mind sitting in the class, when the teacher's teaching everyone, but I prefer having a one-to-one.

AK: Why?

A: Because, you learn much more. They don't know always how to teach the whole class. When someone doesn't understand something, but you do, you just want to move on, but the teacher is staying with that child and you forget what you want to do.

AK: Okay. **How do you feel about assessments?**

A: Well I think assessments, they... sometimes they're cool. I feel fine and they actually help...when they say what they want to do....

AK: If you could choose, how would you like to be assessed?

90 A: I'd like to be assessed on tape.

AK: Should classmates assess each other?

A: No.

AK Why not?

A: Because, well if you're assessing your best friend then obviously they will lie for you or do something for you. They could put instead of you having an A ...having a B give you an A. But if you don't like that person you could instead of giving them a A you'll give them a B.

AK: So think it could be biased?

A: Yeah.

100 **AK: What do you think would be a fair way of assessing learners?**

A: Letting the teacher do it...maybe letting someone who doesn't even know you do it.

AK: You think so?

A: Yeah...like a different teacher.

AK: You think so?

A: Yeah.

AK: You don't think that if the teacher knows you well, they are better able to know what you can do and what can't do?

A: That also is a good point, but say like they do with exams...um...

110 **AK: You think exams are good?**

A: Yeah, because like...give you an assessment of the things you've done over the months...I heard this one thing on the news, people put R1000 on top of some school paper to make some children pass and the person didn't know what to do. So she could have lost her job if she'd taken the money. It was like a test.

AK: Do you think that assessment should help the teacher, should tell them what you can do and what you can't do and where they can help you to do things better?

A: It should be able to help the teacher, but the way that they help us... it isn't always in the best form.

120 AK: What do you mean by that?

A: You could say to someone "Do you understand this?" And they say "yes" and then you never do it again...until a year and a half's time. Then you only get told again and then you don't know and like... the teachers tell you something...and they're supposed to teach you something and they don't...and you don't know, then you leave out half your test. I think that's unfair, because they think you didn't learn.

AK: **Do you think assessments are fair to all?**

A: Well...

AK: If I went into your class and gave everyone the same test, do you think that's fair?

130 A: Well, yeah. Then you're getting assessed on what everyone can do and that's like the class average. What everyone's good at.

AK: It doesn't necessarily assess what everyone is good at. What if someone is better at writing than you are?

A: I would say its better to do a comprehension on tape than to write it down because then you don't have to get marked on your handwriting and spelling and all that... I'd also like to do it on computer.

AK: A, thanks very much for helping me.

A: Okay.

b) Learner B (J):

AK: J, I'm going to ask you some questions and I want you to give me your honest answers to the questions that I ask.

J: Okay.

AK: As I've explained it's about my studies, I'm investigating different assessment procedures. Assessments are like taking tests. You know what assessments mean?

J: Ja.

AK: I'm going to start off with this question. **How do you feel about your report?**

J: Well, umm... its not like top A student report. But it's fairly good, and I'm pleased with it.

10 AK: **Do you think that your reports accurately reflect what you can and can't do?**

J: No I don't.

AK: Explain what you mean.

J: Umm... for example in Maths they say I don't always explain the methods I use but I think I can. Ja, like that.

AK: Okay. **How do you think the teachers obtain the information for your reports?**

J: I think they like study the child. And they check up their working habits and that type of thing.

AK: How do you think they study the child?

20 J: They study the child by seeing how they interact with the other children, and like if they see the child might be like a bit sad on one day the work might not be as good as on a normal other day.

AK: **What do you think assessment is?**

J: Assessment is like an interview, No, it isn't. Its like a test except its umm... ja, its like a test except you don't get marked for it.

AK: So you think.. There's no right or wrong answer. Don't worry about that. So you say it's like a test but there are no marks given for it.

J: Sometimes there are.

AK: Oh, okay. So can get marks or don't get marks, depending on the circumstances.

J: Ja, Ja.

30 **AK: Why do you think teachers assess learners?**

J: Umm.. I think they assess learners because they should know where they're teaching and if they need to help the child or not, because all childs (sic) have their highs and lows.

AK: What do you think the assessment is used for?

J: I think it's used for ...umm, I heard that teachers talk to the principal about some students. Umm... and they meet with him weekly. And they... umm. What did you say?

AK: What do you think the assessment is used for?

J: Oh. It's used for reports and also as I said for helping the child and...also can be used during parent-teacher's meetings.

40 **AK: How do the teachers assess the children in your class?**

J: Umm...we sometimes do orals, when we do tests they probably check out the marks. Umm... when we work in a group they usually checkout how we are working together and etc.

AK: Do you think this form of assessment is fair to everyone?

J: Umm...yes, I do.

AK: Do assessments help you?

J: Mmm.

AK: I want you to explain your answer.

50 J: Yes they do. I think it helps everyone actually. Umm... it helps me because I know what I need to try harder at. When I find out where it's written down in my report or something... and it's... assessment is, after assessment it's like making an own goal, in a sense.

AK: So for you assessments are helpful?

J: Ja.

AK: Setting your goals etc.

J: Ja.

AK: Can you think of other ways teachers can assess learners/pupils?

J: Gee, this is a hard one. Umm... not right now, sorry.

AK: Okay. How do you feel about assessments?

60 J: I feel its necessary.

AK: How do you feel about actually being assessed? Is it a good feeling, a bad feeling, indifferent?

J: Its like a nervous feeling when you're being assessed because you know people want to listen to you and you want to be quick with your answers. And you have to be efficient... so it is quite nervous. But, then again you're quite happy because somebody is taking the time to actually assess you.

AK: Do you think that answers always have to be quick and efficient? Don't you think you have time enough to think about them and...consider your responses?

70 J: Umm... well if there're other people waiting then, ja. You have to be like in movie interviews and stuff... but umm... No not all the time.

AK: **If you could choose, how would you like to be assessed?**

J: Umm... orals. I love doing orals, unprepared or any type of orals, and group work.

AK: Not too hot on the written stuff?

J: No.

AK; Why not?

J: Umm... like in grade 2 ... I had to write a story on Jack and the Beanstalk. They gave us one page and I had to use like six pages and umm... I just, I'm a bit of a perfectionist so I just go on and on and on. I get whoever is assessing me confused.

AK: **Should classmates assess each other?**

80 J: Ja.

AK: Why?

J: For example after one project that we did...we got the children in our group to assess each other. And I thought it was fun from a child's point of view. Who was like at the same level as you, not professional.

AK: And you think those assessments are useful?

J: I think they are, they teach us, because while the children are assessing you, the teacher is also assessing them, to see how they assess you.

AK: Do you think it's useful for you though? Do you get good feedback from your peers/ your classmates?

90 J: Umm... 60-40.

AK: 60-40 which way?

J: Umm... on the good side.

AK Okay. **What do you think would be a fair way of assessing learners?**

So that everybody...everybody in your class has a fair chance of getting assessed objectively?

J: Umm... I think that ... even though I don't think this would ever happen...they would be able to see the questions that would be asked before they were asked. And let them have time to prepare. Even if it's for two minutes. And umm... I think you have to be quite calm if you want to be assessed. Because sometimes you just get your words all muddled up.

AK: So you think giving you, for example your exam questions ahead of time, would be a good thing.

J: Not that way.

AK; You have the parameters of what will be assessed.

J: If it's a big test, but if they're just assessing you like an oral assessment they should give you your topic and give you a bit of time to prepare.
And they give an idea of the type of questions that will be asked.

AK: Do you think that tests and exams and orals are all part of assessment?

J: Yes and no. No... yes I do.

/ 10 AK: J, thank you very much for your help. And for coming to help me with my work.

J: It's a pleasure.

C) Learner A (M):

AK: Hallo, M. thank you for agreeing to help me.

AK: **I want you to tell me how you feel about your reports.**

M: No response.

AK: How did you feel about the report that you've just had?

M: Mmm... I don't know. I...

AK: Were you happy with your report?

M: Yes.

AK: Anything on your report that you didn't like, or didn't agree with?

M: Shakes her head.

10 AK: Happy with it. **Do you think the report accurately reflects what you can and can't do?**

M: No response.

AK: What was written on your report, was true of who you are?

M: Yes.

AK: If any one who didn't know you saw this report, would they know what you were like?

M: Yes.

AK: So it was a good report?

M: Nods.

20 AK: **How do the teachers' get the information for the reports, do you think?**

M: No response (fiddles with question sheet).

AK: You don't have to worry about the questions, just think about them.

M: I don't know. Giggles.

AK: How do you think Ms. X gets the information for your report?

M: My behaviour,

AK: What else?

M: No response.

AK: On your report you get information about your different subjects, where do you think the teachers get that information?

30 M: I don't know. Giggles.

AK: You have no idea at all?

M: No response.

AK: **What do you think assessment is?**

M: No response.

AK: If your teachers gave you an essay or a project or you have an oral or you had a test to write. Do you think that that is all part of assessment?

M: Yes.

AK: You do?

M: Fiddles with paper and glances around (seems nervous).

40 AK: Is the tape recorder making you nervous?

M: Mmm...Giggles.

AK: You don't have to be. I'm the only one who is going to listen to it. No one else. It's just that I can't remember what you say and it's easier for me to have it on tape than to write it all down, because then I can't hear what you're saying. It's just to help me remember. So, don't worry about the tape recorder okay. Tell me what do you think assessment is?

M: Umm...I don't know.

AK: Okay. You know what I'm going to stop this.

(I have approached this learner again, but she declined to be interviewed.)

TEACHER INTERVIEW GUIDE

- ❑ How do you assess the learners in your class?
- ❑ Why do you do assessments?
- ❑ Do you assess all learners in the same way?
- ❑ Could any other forms of assessment work in the inclusive classroom?
- ❑ What is assessment?
- ❑ How do you feel about assessment?
- ❑ What is the purpose of assessment?
- ❑ Is there a single form of assessment that can be used with all learners in your class?
- ❑ Is this form of assessment fair to all?
- ❑ What do you understand inclusive education to be?
- ❑ What difficulties, if any, are you experiencing with inclusion?
- ❑ What improvements would you make if you could?
- ❑ How does inclusion affect assessment (if at all)?
- ❑ Do you think learners who experience learning difficulties should be assessed differently? Explain.
- ❑ Do you think assessments could be an indicator of how you could change your teaching style or method?

(15)

iii. Transcripts of interviews

c) Teacher Class 1 (Ms. X):

AK: How do you assess the children in your class?

X: I find that, an ambiguous question. There are different methods of assessment, and the reason why you assess differently is because there are different types of learners. You need to make sure that you gauge all the different learners. Whether it's a visual, perceptual, written, oral assessment. You need to make sure that you vary the assessment in order to make sure that it is a fair assessment.

AK: You have almost answered the second question as well. Do you assess all the children in the same way?

10 X: No. Certainly not. All children are assessed at the same time but children are assessed at their own ability level, not compared to other children.

AK: Why do you do assessments?

X: Assessments are done to gauge whether or not the children are understanding the material that you have taught. In that way I know whether I need to go back and re-teach something to a specific child who has not been able to understand. Also to pick up on any problems.

AK: Do you think assessments could be an indicator of how you could change your teaching style or method?

20 X: Yes, but this is something I learned before I became a teacher. I learned this in high school when I was a student and I was being assessed. Assessment was always in the written form and often times everybody in the class failed a certain section of the test and that would actually not be a reflection of me as a student but more of a reflection on the teacher. Especially when it happened more than once.

AK; Could any other forms of assessment work in the inclusive classroom? As opposed to the normal traditional assessment?

X: Absolutely, often I'll do a role-play, even group work. You're really assessing the children's understanding of what you're teaching.

AK: What is assessment?

X: Assessment is a measurement of a child's understanding of subject matter, and also the teacher's ability to convey that lesson to the child.

30 **AK: What about the subject material. The content, or the environment? Do you think that assessment has an influence on that or the other way round?**

X: Do you mean is there bias in assessment sometimes? Definitely. I think often times especially in a multi cultural environment. I think here at this school children are from a

similar background and culture so assessment is actually easier. I taught in a public school in America. And, assessment was very different because, of the different types of learners in the class.

AK: How do you feel about assessment?

X: I feel that as long as they are varied they're okay. But the weight of the assessment also needs to be looked at.

40 **AK: What is the purpose of assessment?** I know I've asked you why you do assessment. Do you think there is more than one reason for doing assessment?

X: I think, one of the main reasons for doing assessment is to gauge whether or not they're understanding. But also if I give an oral assessment and the child does very well and the next day I give a written assessment over the same subject matter and the child doesn't do well, that's alarm bells ringing ... then there's a discrepancy with the child understanding.

AK: Do you think assessments can be used for purposes other than gauging where a child is?

X: Oh yeah. Absolutely as I've just said.

50 **AK: So you think they can be used out of context?**

X: Yes and No. I think assessment...also... you have to be very careful because a child might have a social side. So... it's difficult to gauge, also you don't know what happening at home.

AK: What I'm trying to find out is...you do an assessment in the classroom and you're using that for yourself, to find out if the child understands the material you have just taught or whatever. But an independent person coming into the school could look at those marks and use them for a totally different purpose.

60 X: Absolutely. But I don't let my assessments out. I send them home to be signed. But I collect them back. So I would never show an assessment I've done on a child to someone else, to form some sort of opinion of a child. Unless it's creative writing or something and another teacher is giving a professional opinion.

AK: What I was also meaning is, often there is...for instance in a government school...

X: Am I not getting it?

AK: No. No. It's also the way I've phrased the question.

X: Okay.

AK: Besides using it to gauge how you're teaching or how the child is doing, we could also look at the school and see whether our standards are at the right level or what ever. But you have answered the question in another way.

70 X: Are you saying it's a reflection on the teacher? For instance at a government school and someone comes from the department of education?

AK: Yes, which is what is done in many situations. I mean if you look at our matriculation exam and children are in different environments and different schools. Yet they all write exactly the same assessment at the end of their school career. But those assessment are used for all sorts of things like, its used to gauge how our education system is going, about whether our curriculum is accurate or not.

X: Do they look at the individual child or do they just look at the scores?

AK: They do and they don't. Those tests besides telling you how each individual child is doing is also used as a selection process to channel children into different areas. In this context it is not used in this way.

80 **AK: Is there a single form of assessment that you could use with all the children in your classroom?**

X: No. You mean that will empower each child? No, definitely not. There are too many different types of learners in the class.

AK: What do you understand inclusive education to be?

X: Inclusive education I understand to be looking at each child individually and then teaching to the whole child. So making sure you reach each child's potential, so that you reach out to every single child during a year and meet their needs.

AK: Do you think its possible to do that?

X: Yes.

90 **AK: What difficulties if any are you experiencing with inclusion?**

X: I think the biggest difficulty I'm experiencing with inclusion is that ... I taught in America where inclusion has been around for many years and it's a natural part of the education system. Here in SA it is still being developed and its not understood. I'm by no means frustrated by it, but I do see the loopholes. At this point I feel that it's a label and it's a very nice word to use but it's not being implemented properly.

AK: What improvements would you make if you could?

100 X: If I could, I would stream the students and in a different sort of way. For example, if there is a child who has difficulty reading, including them in a reading class with children that are on a grade 6 level when they're on a grade 3 level is not doing that child justice. Instead remove the child during reading period and let him go and have some one-on-one with some other students and a teacher, then come back after 30 minutes and have music with the class or whatever else, social studies, or wherever else they can be integrated.

To integrate them where they can be integrated but to know your limits as a school otherwise you're doing the child a dis-service.

AK: How does inclusion affect assessment if at all?

X: Inclusion affects overall assessment because schools are often looked at as a whole for their marks. Often times when there's inclusion it may bring the grade average down. If their marks are included. Are their marks included? I don't know.

110 A: Some it depends on the attitude of the teacher.

X: I don't assess my inclusion children the same as I do the rest of the class. For some children the tests are very different or the way I test them are very different. So their assessment is very different.

AK: Do you think the mainstream child suffers because of accommodating or inclusion?

X: No, not. If anything they gain.

AK: Do you think children who experience LD should be assessed differently?

X: Yes

120 AK: I want to ask you another question. You were talking about streaming in America, and the way you described it is very much the way JD described it. You're in a resource room and you have children there at different times of the day. Coming out to you.

130 X: Yes, yes. You would have a classroom like this. And you would structure the timetable so that for example the whole of grade 6 would have reading at the same time. 2 or 3 children out of my class and perhaps 1 child out of the other class would come in here for that lesson. And you would perhaps do the same book as the rest of the class, or do a different book with you. I'm using reading as an example. Perhaps you're teaching them the basics of comprehension, or you're working on a specific skill with them, so what you have is instead of sitting in a classroom with a child who is integrated with the kids but is so lost and so unhappy because they just feel complete failures. Whereas they could be going in and out of the class depending on the lesson. In social studies they're in here and doing well because they're integrated and they're talking and its group work and they're able to get help. A lot of it has to do with self-esteem. Building their self-esteem like the mainstream child.

AK: Well, thank you very much for your help and co-operation, input and everything else.

d) Teacher Class 2 (Mrs. Y):

AK: You know I'm doing research on assessment. Mrs. Y, thanks for agreeing to be interviewed. **What is assessment to you?**

Y: There are two aspects to assessment. One, for the teacher to assess the teaching and to see where/what direction she needs to follow, and where there needs to be more input; and the other assessment obviously is for /is dictated by the fact that we have a report that we issue to give to parents. and the school has to have some record and academic profile of the child. That's the other side of assessment.

AK: You have actually also answered the next question, what is the purpose of assessment and you've said for school reports and to see if children understand the work. **How do you feel about assessments?**

Y: I find that the assessments I do for myself, to assess my own teaching, those are very valuable/invaluable to me, it covers what my next lesson is going to be about. I think it is a very important aspect, the continuous assessment of what the children have understood of the class and the lesson. The other more formal aspect of assessment, a lot of the time you're really just going through the motions. You know it's all in a state of flux at the moment. Previously we'd get our standardized averages, it was all very strictly controlled, what the assessment needed to consist of. Now we're in this state of flux, how we're going to assess and what marks to reflect and what kind of report we're going to have. Over the last few years I've found it very frustrating, I know we're not very far down the line and what our assessments are going to look like, the powers that be are still deciding.

AK: Do you think its better to have more formalized assessments? Or do you prefer to go with your gut feel, be more informal and do your own thing?

Y: Ja. I look, again. Well you know, on the one side as an experienced teacher, I know... at the beginning of the year, after a few weeks, I can give you a very clear indication of the levels of competence in the class. Nothing much changes in the course of the year...I'm sorry what did you ask?

AK: Which do you prefer, more formal...?

Y: Oh, ja. Certainly there is room for standardization. If one is working with two or three classes, in a standard there has to be some kind of measure across the board and for young teachers it is very important to have some kind of guidelines on how to assess a child. Now that we don't have to keep children back ... you know those children, really a fifty-percenter will always be a fifty-percenter. All you can do is repetition.

AK: Do you think that assessment is a good tool, an indicator that can inform your teaching practice?

Y: It does. Certainly, the more informal kind of tests that definitely informs my teaching. But a lot of the other assessments, things like comprehension... really we spend our life marking work that children are not going to learn from. Children learn from a comprehension if you're going to teach it, they're not going to learn from a

40 comprehension if you're going to test it. Whether you do corrections or don't they don't learn from it. I'd rather spend more time on the teaching than the assessing.

AK: Do you ever feedback the information from your assessments to children?

Y: Depending. Depending on what kind of assessment it is. There isn't the time for too much individualized assessment. For instance if they're doing orals, yes one does. I give a lot of written assessments like projects, it's very important that children do get feedback. I don't think it's important that they have to be graded. Whether you give them a mark or a symbol, it's really just to satisfy them. I don't give feedback to kids who do really badly. I don't actually think it's relevant to their learning. If I know they can improve that's different. But if a child can't spell telling him he has to improve his spelling is
50 pointless.

AK: **Do you think there will ever be an assessment that you could use across the board with all children? That assesses each child fairly?**

Y: No because, as you know a lot of children have difficulty. If you have to assess, it would have to be a whole variety of assessment tools. If there is a child who is not a very good reader he is at a disadvantage. Others if you give an oral and they have difficulty with remembering lines. No I don't think there could be one across the board. We're using them, a lot of the time that's what we use. Because that's what there is...

AK: **What do you think then assessment is all about? Why are we still assessing?**

Y: Well. I think we're assessing because the system demands that we give some kind of
60 quantitative report to the parents. But I think assessment needs to go. We're not measuring children against their classmates, against standardized norms. We're measuring children against what one knows they can do.

AK: I'm surprised at what you're saying. I think the perception that people often have about you is that you're standardized oriented.

Y: Yes. I'm not. I'm a remedial teacher. But I'm in a system. That's the system I work in. Your standardized tests are what you're stuck with. It should all be thrown out the window. If I could create my own it would be a very different thing.

AK: **What do you feel about inclusion?**

Y: I feel very strongly that we have to be very honest with ourselves with regard to what
70 we believe inclusion is. And I think we mustn't bluff ourselves when there is inclusion that we're meeting the needs of each child. I don't think even in a regular class you actually land up meeting the needs of maybe three-quarters of them. I think it's a good policy and I think children need to be amongst their peers. Here at this school, over the last few years they have managed to keep children with their own age group and that's been effective. Previously when we had to have children repeat and repeat and eventually they would be with children two or three years younger than they were. I think that led to a lot of behavioural issues with the child, social issues. And the child by repeating did not necessarily progress any way. So that's been good.

AK: So you think it's a good thing that they stay with their peer group?

80 Y: Absolutely. And then try and meet whatever their needs are. I think that staying with the peer group you're cutting out all the other negative hassles that one has with these children. They can keep their self-confidence in tact, while boosting them in all sorts of ways. Inclusion is important. I think there has to be a realistic look at what kind of children need to be included. I just think a really severely handicapped child, there would have to be major adjustments in our school, and yes that would be a challenge but severely handicapped, intellectually disabled children, that to me is a different thing. If you include them I don't think you do them justice. The social issues are not that important for them, I think, they're so different anyway. I really can't believe that any teacher can honestly say they meet those children's needs.

90 AK: And children with learning difficulties, do you think they benefit from inclusion? Do you think it's detrimental to their classmates to have them in the class?

Y: No, definitely not detrimental for their classmates. I think it's very important that their classmates see that the world is made up of children of all sorts of differing abilities. I think it's also very important they see that even if they do have learning difficulties, they all do have talents of some kind, and to make sure one uses your talents. I find that working in co-operative groups, the children in the group are actually really good about understanding. They really get to know these kids and they use them. Very rarely do I find that a child is being sidelined because they have an inability. There's a greater tolerance. Even the brighter kids have disabilities of their own. They don't write as well or
100 sing or talk or whatever it is.

AK: You've answered almost all I wanted to ask because you give such full feedback.
What improvements would you make, if you could build an ideal system?

Y: Firstly, I think that one has to look at more personnel. For one teacher to handle a big class! One has to look at all the young people out there. I think that all young people should be used to the benefit of the system. I think when they finish their university education, whatever their qualification, they need to come and assist teachers for a year. Every class should have one person extra. It's not that the teacher doesn't want to help the children experiencing difficulties, but you physically are busy elsewhere. You don't have the time. They can physically just take that child for just three minutes and read
110 something to them or the child can read to you or you can transcribe something, it would be an enormous help. Also we need more room. We need to create areas in our classroom where you could have tape-recorders, and you could have a child sitting with headphones listening to something. You need more space where you could say to somebody "Take Johnny, go and sit over there and read the paper to him", while the rest of the class are working. I can't imagine where there is overcrowding, what it's like. Where there is no space for individualized work. That's where it disadvantages other children, even the 'normal' ones, there are so many who are easily distracted, where you have other noise or other things going on, those children are disadvantaged whether you like it or not. I don't always see a classroom assistant as someone to assist me and
120 mostly these children can work independently and you want them to. But you need to have somebody there that can oversee the process; this frees the teacher up to get on with the teaching. Especially if the teacher is inexperienced.

AK: Thanks very much.

Appendix C: Examples of Assessment and Reporting

i. Special Needs Profiles

▪ Learner C (Class 2)

Alan* is a 12-year old boy presenting with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) as well as specific writing, spelling and reading difficulties. He is the youngest of three children all of whom experience difficulties with learning. He has received numerous interventions over the years including OT, remedial and medical (Ritalin) for his ADD. He is currently having OT, remedial (both of which necessitate withdrawal from the classroom) and medical intervention. Although he follows the same curriculum as the rest of the grade, some assessments are modified (use of a tape aid or reader) to accommodate his difficulties.

SPECIAL NEEDS PROFILE

Name: Learner C	SN1	SN2	SN3	SN4	SNE
Grade: 5L/ 6M					

1. BRIEF HISTORY

DOB: 21/3/1990

Assessment:

- OT Assessment 3/3/1994. Assessed privately. Weakness in postural control, bilateral integration and fine-motor skills. OT commenced March 1994
- Psycho-educational assessment Dec 1994, done privately. Signs of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. No hand dominance. WPPSI done (V= superior; NV= superior; Full Scale = superior; some inter test scatter but no significant difference between verbal and non-verbal was noted). Needs structured environment, and OT. Ritalin trial recommended.
- OT discharge 29/3/1995
- Experiencing difficulty and a full assessment recommended in June 2001. WISC-111 done - school psychologist (V= high average; NV= average; Full Scale = average. 20 point discrepancy between verbal and non-verbal which is significant). OT, Ritalin recommended as well as continued remedial support and classroom support.

*Fictitious names were used to protect those in the study

Medical / Other:

- Remedial support received since 1997 in Grade 1
- Ritalin started again in March 2001
- 2002: OT once a week since June 2001 increased to twice weekly since May 2002; remedial support weekly.
- September 2002 - father indicated his intention to halt both remedial and OT as "no progress is being made".

2. LEARNING SKILLS

Learning Skill Area	Observation/Comment
Verbal Expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Struggles to organize thoughts • Struggles to find the right vocabulary
Written Expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has difficulty with written expression • Has difficulty with spelling
Reading Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading ability average but laboured • Has difficulty transferring knowledge and understanding of a passage onto paper.
Organisation and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disorganized personally and regarding work layout etc.
Attention/ Concentration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Struggles to maintain focus • Easily distracted
Memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent memory for facts • Has difficulty with visuo-spatial recall
Handwriting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has difficulty with mechanics of writing • Writing almost illegible
Numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misses important info as he struggles to focus • Number work and measurement, accuracy needs attention
Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wants to do well
Co-operation/ interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works well in a group and always contributes • Always willing to co-operate

Emotional /Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interacts well with peers, well liked
Rate of work/ Task completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slow inaccurate work
Tests and Exams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have put tests onto tape for audio input • Text also read to him

3. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Socially okay
- Maths and computers easier
- General knowledge very good
- Has difficulty getting organized
- Has difficulty with language and written work

4. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Needs structure and support
- Need to adapt the approach to written work and assessments

5. MODIFICATIONS

- Needs a decrease in volume of work, especially written work
- Needs alternate form of assessment

Note:

SN1=WCED Dispensations only

SN2=Accommodations for Remedial Training

SN3=Modifications to Curriculum

SN4=Individualised Education Programme (IEP)

SNE=Emotionally Based Accommodation

Interview with A

<u>Likes</u>	<u>Dislikes</u>
English: Likes comprehension as you "get to use big words". Thinks spoken vocabulary is good.	Copying from the board. Finds reading difficult. Writing also difficult as can only use words he can spell. Spelling difficulty.
Afrikaans:	Don't like this, can't understand or use it. Most difficult subject, can't write down or read books. Feels that Mevrou singles him out and picks on him.
R.I: It is easier than other subjects.	Have difficulty concentrating.
3rd Lang.:	Can't write sentences, reading it very difficult.
Maths: Understand concepts slower, has difficulty remembering tables and bonds	Likes geometry and measuring. Mrs M. explains well and can understand better.
Computers: Fun, enjoy it and can do it.	Not that fast with typing
<p>General: Writing difficult because his hand tires easily. Can't write fast and keep up. Feels frustrated because he tries hard but doesn't do well.</p> <p>If you could wave a wand and change anything what would you do?</p> <p>Would get someone to help me when I need it. Sometimes Mrs. is busy and my group gets cross and doesn't want to help me because they're busy.</p>	

ii. Abridged School Report and Mark Schedules

Dear Parents

GUIDE TO THE READING OF THIS REPORT

In keeping with our commitment towards Outcomes Based Education we have developed a new report that reflects comprehensively the progress your child is making in the various areas of the curriculum.

Each subject has an individual page and this is divided into two sections. The first section examines your child's work habits, attitude to the subject and interaction with peers. The second section indicates your child's competence in the specific areas of the work.

Your child's performance is rated according to the key provided on each page.

We offer enrichment and extension in both sporting and cultural activities after school hours. Your child's participation in these areas is indicated. An outline of the curriculum in the enrichment subjects is included.

On the final page are your child's attendance record, the principal's comment and the date of the Parent Teacher Meeting. Please sign the report and return it to your child's class teacher.

You will have an opportunity to discuss the report with the individual teachers at the Parent Teacher Meeting.

PRINCIPAL

CYCLE 3

COMMUNICATION TO TEACHERS – 2002

REPORTS FOR THE SECOND CYCLE - GRADES 4 - 6

1. SCHEDULE MEETINGS

Kindly note the following arrangements:

Schedule meetings for subject teachers. The following must be brought to meeting:

1. Completed yellow mark sheets. These must include:

- a) breakdown of marks
- b) pupil's average mark
- c) grade average mark

2. Completed subject report sheet

3. Short subject comment

General comment to be formulated at meeting. This must include:

.....will proceed to Grade.....

2. REPORTS

CLASS TEACHERS are responsible for

1. Handing out subject report sheets
2. General comment
3. Individual development profile and extra mural check list
4. Final check to see that ALL SUBJECT TEACHERS have filled in their section
5. Hand to Principal for signing by Friday 29 November
6. Duplicate reports
7. Mark schedule

SUBJECT TEACHERS are responsible for filling in:

1. Their own report sheet
2. Yellow mark sheets

3. MARK SCHEDULES

Class teachers must complete these in BLACK INK once all the assessment sheets have been put into the report file. These schedules plus all the assessment sheets must be filed in the cabinet in the Principal's office.

4. MERIT AWARDS

Teachers must decide at schedule meetings which pupils are eligible. A class list must be filled in with the relevant information and handed to the office for typing. This will serve as a record for the year. Please refer to lists from previous terms.

5. DIVORCED PARENTS

A list of names will be put on the notice board in the staff room of those parents who have requested a further copy. CLASS TEACHERS must ensure that the duplicate is also completed by the teachers. These must be handed to the office for posting.

6. GRADE AVERAGES

Each grade has a set of estimated grade averages based upon the pass rate. Teachers must ensure that the grade averages fall within the ranges as set. Please refer any variations to Mr Fr

GRADE 6 AVERAGES

English, Science and Humanities	64 - 70
Afrikaans, Maths, Hebrew	60 - 65

GRADE 5 AVERAGES

English, Science and Humanities	67 - 72
Afrikaans, Maths, Hebrew	65 - 70

GRADE 4 AVERAGES

English, Science and Humanities	72 - 76
Afrikaans, Maths, Hebrew	67 - 72

SCHEDULES UPPER PRIMARY CYCLE 2

<u>DATE</u>	<u>CLASS</u>	<u>PERIODS</u>	<u>VENUE</u>	<u>CHAIR</u>
Wed 20/11	4S	5,6,7	workroom	H
Wed 20/11	4V	1,2,3	workroom	H
Thurs 21/11	5H	2,3,4	workroom	Fr
Fri 22/11	5F	5,6,7	workroom	Fr
Mon 25/11	6M	2,3,4	workroom	M
Tues 26/11	6H	2,3,4	workroom	M

ENGLISH				
NAME: A		TEACHER:		CLASS: 6m
WORK HABITS		CYCLE 1	CYCLE 2	CYCLE 3
KEY	1: ALWAYS 3: SOMETIMES	2: USUALLY 4: NEEDS ATTENTION		
Follows instructions		4	3	
Takes care in presentation of work		3/4	3	
Concentrates in lessons		3	2/3	
Works independently		3	2/3	
Completes tasks within time frame		4	3	
Regularly completes homework		4	2	
Displays co-operative work skills		2	2	
SUBJECT SKILLS				
KEY	1: EXCELLENT 2: GOOD 3: SATISFACTORY 4: MAKING PROGRESS 5: NEEDS ATTENTION			
SPEAKING AND LISTENING SKILLS:				
Is a receptive listener		4	3	
Speaks clearly and fluently		4	4	
Contributes to class discussions		1	1	
Uses a wide vocabulary		4/5	5	
READING:				
Reads with understanding		5	5	
Reads fluently and accurately		5	5	
Enjoys reading		4	4	
WRITTEN WORK:				
Expresses ideas clearly		5	5	
Writes with creativity and imagination		4	4	
Spells accurately		5	5	
Uses appropriate punctuation and structure		5	5	
COMPREHENSION				
Can find relevant information		5	4	
Answers with understanding		5	5	
TEACHER'S COMMENTS				
CYCLE 1				
A. enjoys all oral work and group and class discussions where he has much to offer. Written tasks present enormous difficulties, not just in putting pen to paper but in organising his thought processes as well.				
CYCLE 2				
A. has settled down to far more consistent work habits both in class and at home. He is eager to progress and with continued application his results will improve. We will assist him and give him support wherever possible.				
CYCLE 3				

AFRIKAANS				
NAME: <i>A</i>		TEACHER:		CLASS: <i>6M</i>
WORK HABITS		CYCLE 1	CYCLE 2	CYCLE 3
KEY	1: ALWAYS 3: SOMETIMES	2: USUALLY 4: NEEDS ATTENTION		
Follows instructions		3	3	
Takes care in presentation of work		4	4	
Concentrates in lessons		3	2/3	
Works independently		3	3	
Completes tasks within time frame		3	3	
Regularly completes homework		4	4	
Displays co-operative work skills		3	2	
SUBJECT SKILLS				
KEY	1: EXCELLENT 4: MAKING PROGRESS	2: GOOD 3: SATISFACTORY 5: NEEDS ATTENTION		
SPEAKING AND LISTENING SKILLS:				
Is a receptive listener		4	4	
Expresses ideas clearly		5	4	
Learns vocabulary		4	3	
Applies vocabulary		4	4	
READING:				
Reads with understanding		3	3	
Reads fluently		4	3	
Reads accurately		4	3	
WRITTEN WORK:				
Constructs sentences correctly		4	4	
Uses correct punctuation		3	3	
Spells accurately		4	4	
COMPREHENSION:				
Can find relevant information		4	3	
Writes meaningful answers		4	4	
TEACHER'S COMMENTS				
CYCLE 1 <i>A. is encouraged to revise the work done in a class on a daily basis so as to re-inforce what has been taught. Homework must be done on a regular basis.</i>				
CYCLE 2 <i>A is learning his spelling diligently. There has been an improvement in certain aspects of the language and A is encouraged to keep up his efforts.</i>				
CYCLE 3				

MATHEMATICS				
NAME: A		TEACHER:		CLASS: 6M
WORK HABITS		CYCLE 1	CYCLE 2	CYCLE 3
KEY	1: ALWAYS 3: SOMETIMES	2: USUALLY 4: NEEDS ATTENTION		
Follows instructions		4	3	
Takes care in presentation of work		4	3	
Concentrates in lessons		4	3	
Works independently		3	3	
Completes tasks within time frame		3	2	
Regularly completes homework		3	2	
Displays co-operative work skills		2	2	
SUBJECT SKILLS				
KEY	1: EXCELLENT 4: MAKING PROGRESS	2: GOOD 3: SATISFACTORY 5: NEEDS ATTENTION		
Displays a positive attitude towards the learning of mathematics		2	1	
Measurement/Shape Work		5	4	
Number concepts		4/5	4	
Works accurately and efficiently		4	4	
Can explain thinking and methods		3	3	
Develops problem solving strategies		4	4	
TEACHER'S COMMENTS				
CYCLE 1 <i>A has not managed to give his full attention to his work in class and misses important explanations. Although he shows a keen willingness to learn, he has found difficulty in structuring his work and homework tasks.</i>				
CYCLE 2 <i>A has really tried hard to give of his best most of the time and there has been an all round improvement in both attitude and level of understanding. He is encouraged to continue his effort both in class & at home.</i>				
CYCLE 3				

NATURAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES				
NAME: A		TEACHER:		CLASS: 6M
WORK HABITS		CYCLE 1	CYCLE 2	CYCLE 3
KEY	1: ALWAYS 3: SOMETIMES	2: USUALLY 4: NEEDS ATTENTION		
Follows instructions		4	3	
Takes care in presentation of work		4	3	
Concentrates in lessons		3/4	3	
Works independently		3	2	
Completes tasks within time frame		4	3	
Regularly completes homework		3/4	2	
Displays co-operative work skills		2	2	
SUBJECT SKILLS				
KEY	1: EXCELLENT 4: MAKING PROGRESS	2: GOOD 5: NEEDS ATTENTION	3: SATISFACTORY	
Analyses information		4	3	
Shows understanding of subject matter		4	3	
Demonstrates factual recall relevant to topics		4	3	
Displays an inquiring attitude		2	2	
Makes informed contributions		2	2	
Is developing research skills		4/5	4	

TEACHER'S COMMENTS

CYCLE 1

A is a most interested pupil in all class activities. He has a fairly good general knowledge and enjoys class discussions. However, he experiences great difficulty in processing his knowledge and writing it down in assessments. He needs daily revision of the work to ensure retention of the facts.

CYCLE 2

A has worked with far greater commitment and consistency and he can feel very proud of the improvement in all aspects of the work. A you are encouraged to continue to make maximum effort at all times.

CYCLE 3

Explorers' Project on: The Vikings
Project by: A

Grade:

*	**	***
		C
		C
		A
		B
		B
		B
		A

Facts

- A. You have included many facts.
- B. You have included sufficient facts.
- C. You have included too few facts.

Information

- A. You have found a great deal of interesting information.
- B. You have given some interesting information.
- C. You could have found more information.

Research Skills

- A. You have rewritten what you discovered in your own words.
- B. There is some evidence of your own work, but you have also copied straight out of books.
- C. You have written too much straight from your source books.

Language and Spelling

- A. You have written full sentences without spelling errors.
- B. Most of your information was correctly written.
- C. You must ensure that you check your work for careless errors.

Illustrations, drawings, sketches, diagrams, pictures

- A. You have enhanced your project with lovely visual material.
- B. You have used a few items to illustrate your project.
- C. You could have tried to include some visual material to add interest and colour.

Presentation

- A. You have presented a neat, well laid-out project which shows originality.
- B. Your project was neat with fairly good organization.
- C. Your project could have been neater and better organized.

Map

- A. Your map is correctly labelled and its presentation enhances your project.
- B. Your map is correctly labelled, but is not neat enough and there are a few errors.
- C. Your map could have been neater, colour could have been used, and you have careless errors.

***	***	***

Report Back

- A. You communicated your information in an interesting and clear manner.
- B. You were fairly well-prepared, but you could have presented the work in a more interesting way.
- C. You did not prepare thoroughly enough and did not put enough effort into your presentation.

[illegible]

* *This is what I think.*

Signed: _____

**** This is what my group thinks.**

Signed:

*** This is what my teacher thinks. Signed: Mamadien

I am pleased to note that you put time and effort into this project. It is neatly typed — I hope you did this — and you answered questions 4 to 9 intelligently and in detail. However, the first section was incomplete and needed more facts & research. It is very important to cover everything that is required. Unfortunately, as your project was not here on time, the group was unable to give their recommendation.

Co-operative Group Task Assessment

Group Members' Names: Michelle Julian
cheera

Your Name: A.

.....

	Beginning 1	Developing 2	Accomplished 3	Exemplary 4	Score
Contribute					
Research & Gather Information	Does not collect any information that relates to the topic	Collects very little information – some relates to the topic	Collects some basic information – most relates to the topic	Collects a great deal of information – all relates to the topic	2
Share Information	Does not relate any information to teammates	Relays very little information – some relates to the topic	Relays some basic information – most relates to the topic	Relays a great deal of information – all relates to the topic	3
Questioning	No interaction with team during discussion periods	Limited interaction; discusses some questions	Limited interaction, but does discuss and pose some questions	Interacts, discusses and poses questions to all teammates	1
Take responsibility					
Fulfil Team Role's Duties	Does not perform any duties of assigned team role	Performs very little of the duties assigned	Performs nearly all the duties assigned	Performs all duties of assigned team role	2
Share Equally	Always relies on others to do the work	Rarely does the assigned work – often needs reminding	Usually does the assigned work – rarely needs reminding	Always does the assigned work without having to be reminded	2
Be Punctual	Does not hand in any assignments	Hands in most assignments late	Hands in most assignments on time	Hands in all assignments on time	2
Value Others' Viewpoints					
Listen to Other Teammates	Is always talking – never allows anyone else to speak	Usually does most of the talking – rarely allows others to speak	Listens, but sometimes talks too much	Listens and speaks a fair amount	3
Cooperate with Teammates	Usually argues with teammates	Sometimes argues	Rarely argues	Never argues with teammates	2
Make Fair Decisions	Usually wants to have things their way	Often sides with friends instead of considering all views	Usually considers all views	Always helps team to reach a fair decision	2
Total:					19

Adapted from: <http://edweb.sdsu.edu/triton/tidepoolunit/Rubrics/collrubric.html>

A there are some areas where you can work hard at improving your skills so that you can be a more valuable team member.

Self Assessment

- 1= very well
2= quite well
3= with difficulty
4= hardly at all

Individual Tasks

How well were you able to...	
1. Set clear goals	2
2. Make progress towards goals	2
3. Plan ahead	3
4. Organise yourself and your work to avoid last minute rush	2
5. Complete homework tasks	2
6. Take pride in your tasks	2
7. Give of your best at all times	2
8. Understand the work covered	2
9. Work in a positive and conscientious manner	2
10. Work confidently	4
11. Take responsibility for what you did	4
12. Not use hurtful words or use snide remarks	4

Group Tasks

How well were you able to...	
1. Listen to others ideas	1
2. Accept differing points of view	1
3. Give other's the opportunity to speak without interrupting	2
4. Accept criticism	2
5. Communicate clearly with others	1
6. Collaborate on a group task without conflict	3
7. Understand the feelings of others	4
8. Motivate the members of the group	1
9. Show respect for other opinions	2
10. Give credit/compliment others for doing a good job	2
11. Contribute suggestions to your group	1

- The skill(s) I would like to focus on for next term is/are: of the four
- What I can do to accomplish this goal: work harder

Thank you for your honest assessment, & you know where you need to put in the extra effort and I am sure that you will succeed.

A

CYCLE 1	Parent Teachers Meeting - The following subject teachers especially need to see you:
NUMBER OF DAYS ABSENT: 5	Afrikaans; Studies; English
GENERAL	
A has found the increased workload and pace in grade 6 difficult to cope with in most subjects. We will continue to give him every assistance to help him to progress.	
PRINCIPAL	
A I look forward to your progress in cycle 2. Keep giving it your best shot although it is difficult for you. Fred	
PARENT: Your response to this report:	
SIGNATURE:	
PUPIL: My goals for next cycle:	
CYCLE 2	Parent Teachers Meeting - The following subject teachers especially need to see you:
NUMBER OF DAYS ABSENT:	
GENERAL	
Although of late A has been quite as focussed, on the whole there has been great improvement on his application in the class and classroom behaviour. Congratulations on your Merit Award, for general improvement.	
PRINCIPAL	
Well done on the progress you have made, A Fred	
PARENT: Your response to this report:	
SIGNATURE:	
PUPIL: My goals for next cycle:	
CYCLE 3	
NUMBER OF DAYS ABSENT:	
GENERAL	
PRINCIPAL	

EXTRA MURAL ACTIVITIES			
NAME: A	CLASS: 6 m		
	CYCLE 1	CYCLE 2	CYCLE 3
Art			
Chess			
Choir			
Chumash Club			
Cooking			
Computers			
Cricket	✓	✓	
Cross Country			
Jewish Studies Enrichment			
Netball			
Peer Mediation			
Soccer	✓	✓	
Sunshine Club			
Swimming	✓		
Table Tennis			
Tennis			

ENRICHMENT SUBJECTS ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
CYCLE 1
CYCLE 2
CYCLE 3

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT					
KEY	1: ALWAYS 3: SOMETIMES	2: USUALLY 4: NEEDS ATTENTION	CYCLE 1	CYCLE 2	CYCLE 3
Is helpful and co-operative			2	2	
Interacts well with peers			2	2	
Takes responsibility for belongings and equipment			4	4	
Is well-mannered			1	1	
Demonstrates good organizational skills			4	4	
Works without disturbing others			3	3	
Demonstrates initiative			3	3	

TEACHER: M..... GRADE 6M.....
 CYCLE: 1..... GRADE AVERAGE: 65%
 SUBJECT: ENGLISH.....
 ORAL & VOCAB READ WRITING COMPRE LANG & SPELL %

	14	2	18	16	6	56										
	13	2	20	15	9	59										
	13	2	21	17	8	61										
	17	5	25	26	14	87										
	12	2	17	16	6	53										
	16	5	23	22	12	78										
	14	3	24	22	10	73										
	16	5	21	21	9	72										
	11	2	21	16	6	56										
	11	1	17	16	6	51										
A	10	1	12	11	3	37										←
	15	5	23	19	13	75										
	13	2	18	17	7	57										
	13	4	18	16	11	62										
	16	5	25	22	13	81										
	14	2	20	17	9	62										
	13	2	21	19	9	64										
	13	3	19	16	8	59										
	15	5	24	21	13	78										
	15	4	23	24	10	76										